

A Word

ADVICE

To those who never Receiv'd the

SACRAMENT: *necessary*

for all that have

OR, THE

True PENITENT

INSTRUCTED,

Before, At, and After

The Receiving the *Lord's Supper.*

WITH

Meditations suited to the several parts
of that solemn Ordinance, particularly
with respect to *Easter, Whitsuntide and*
Christmasts.

The Whole written in a different Method
from any thing published on this Subject.

Prayers for use of Wine & Cereals and bread
By a Person of Honour. *Dr Kenn BP*

LONDON, *of Bath & Wells*

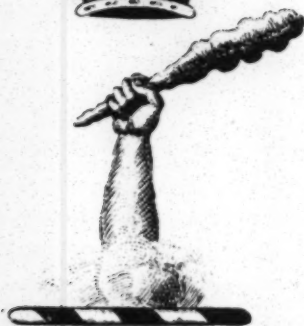
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Advice to those who never rec ^d y ^e Sacrament pag 1	
Reflections of a true penitent upon his first convict	18
A Confession of sin	24
A Prayer	30
A Prayer when there is an amendment in vs	43
Meditation preparatory to y ^e communion	59
Preparatory prayers before y ^e communion	72
A concluding prayer	86
A prayer on Saturday night	90
Devotions the day we communicate	95
A Prayer after consecration	137
Prayer while others communicate	138
A Meditation upon y ^e Element of Bread	143
— Upon y ^e Element of Wine	149
As we give up the Altar & at rec ^d Bread &	150
= Before the cup & after	160
A meditation for y ^e communion on Xmas	172
on Easter	174
on Whit-Sunday	176
Trinity Sunday	179
at Home before dinner	182
Observations for keeping y ^e Sabbath	184
Prayer that night of y ^e Sacram ^t	195
The conclusion	201

A B V I C E

To those who never knew the

SACRAMENT

OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT

IS EXPLAINED

IN A SERIES OF

THE NEW TESTAMENT

IN A SERIES OF

EXPOSITIONS

OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

LONDON

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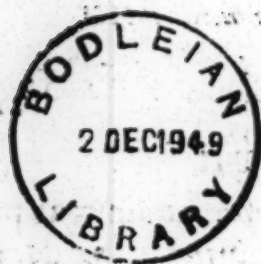
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FD-270

SECRET



T H E

P R E F A C E.

WHatever Apologies the World may expect for Books of another Nature, I think they ought not to be gratified in Books of this, for whatever tends to regulate our conversation, and advance a happiness in another World when our hopes fail us here, is sufficient to recommend it self.

Its unaccountable, that since Religion, in spite of all designs to undermine and make it look titile, asserts its own Authority and make men confess its beauties, that they should be such fools as not to be charm'd by them. Since Atheism and Infidelity are become meer Name, and Men are obliged to own a Being, which they have the Impudence to disobey: It may become a Question, Whether they had not better have continued in their Opinion that there was no God, if there were ever any such, than pretend to own a Being, and pay so little respect to it: How Men came to distrust the God who made them, or not carefully observe him whom they own to be the Maker of the World, are things equally unaccountable; that Man, who is endued with Reason, and capable to convince himself, that he is not of himself, and that whatever was the Cause of him, must have a Cause, or that that

The Preface.

Cause must be Eternal, and the Maker of all things, who is forced from Natural Principles, and common Arguments, to allow a first Cause, and that he cou'd not have had this Knowledge if this Cause, had not revealed it self : That the same reason, which inclines him to take any thing for truth of which he han't demonstration, or to give credit to any thing, obliges him to believe the Account of God, of Religion, and Himself, which is delivered in the Scriptures, and for the truth of which there is the best Testimony in the world. For their Antiquity, there is nothing so ancient, and for their Credit, they have the general Consent of all Ages, Jewish and Christian. So that if they be true, we ought to give our entire Assent to all that is declared, and they testifie of One whom God was to send to redeem this sinful World : For Man fell from what he was created, and stood in need of an Attonement ; that this Person in the fulness of time was manifested to the World, being conceived by the Spirit of God, and born of a Virgin ; that he wrought Miracles ; taught us an exact Rule of Faith and Obedience, and then laid down his life as a Ransom for all that should believe on him ; that after his death, he raised himself from the dead, and in the sight of his Disciples ascended into Heaven, and there remains, till he shall come to judge the World : That he appointed Apostles, and gave them power to make Bishops, Priests and Deacons, that by such an Order of Men, the Laws which he Commanded might be taught to us, and the Rites of that Religion which he planted,

The Preface.

planted, duly performed. Of this we are infallibly assured, and though we have the witness of Men, yet the witness of God is greater, and he that can no more deceive than be deceived, has positively confirmed. We have had a constant succession of men in the Priestly Office, even to this time, what then is the cause of our Dissensions, of our Unbelief and Misbelief, but that they who polluted our Manners, would betray our Faith, and make us altogether incapable of those Blessings which these Scriptures promise us to enjoy; why such industry to bear down Revealed Religion, but that Men hate the light which would expose their Deeds that are Evil. Why are they so laborious to defame that Doctrine which has increased against Opposition, and the malice of Hell, and will be preserved to the end of the World: 'Tis impossible to know a God reconciled without revelation, and if he has revealed himself it must be by some body, and is there any that they can prefer to our Saviour, who has the witness of the Father and the Holy Ghost concerning him. He was prophesied of 3000 Years before, and exactly answered the Character of him that was to come: What Excuse then can Men have for their Obstinacy, who pretend to own a God, and yet won't believe the words of his Mouth? Is there any Law, any Precept, any Character misbecoming the Dignity and Wisdom of the Son of God? Has our Saviour said any thing to be the Will of his Father which is not rational, and most becoming the Almighty Governor of Heaven and Earth? If not, Why shou'd the hearts

The Preface.

of the Sons of Men be lifted up, and despise the Estates of this preacher of Righteousness? If they own a God, can they serve him in a more acceptable manner? Can they propose better Rules of Conversation, be govern'd by better Laws, be better Men than the Scripture can make them? If there is nothing in the Scripture misbecoming an infinite Wisdom, and they declare to us the Will of God, which is, that we shou'd believe and obey his Son, why shou'd we refuse to serve him, as he himself thinks fit? So little reason has the Deist for his Opinion, that 'tis impossible to establish it, unless we destroy that by which we came to know there is a God, which no Man cou'd have done without Original Impressions upon his Soul, or explicit Revelation. So that it is to live unaccountably, to believe they know not why, but do what seems Good in their own Eyes, and every man to worship a Being which he reveals to himself, which being impossible is to live in the possession of absurd Principles, and which are not answerable to the common Reason of Mankind.

But these are not the only Persons who are prejudicial to Religion, for that suffers like our selves, most by those who pretend to be our Friends; the Wisdom of God so far condescended to our weakness, as to make himself known in a wonderful manner. When our first Parents fell, sin entred into the World, and Death by sin, for in them all Men were made sinners; if our Parents transgressed, we must derive a contagion from their Loins, for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean, and if we are conceived and
born

The Preface.

born in Sin, what is Man that he should be clean or he that is born of a Woman, that he should be Righteous: God saw this, and knew our insufficiency, that we should incline to Evil, and cou'd have no merit to atone his Justice, for what cou'd the Sons of Violence offer that was clean, or Man, miserable Man, propose to restore himself to the favour of God. But God was pleased to propose a sacrifice, to take away the sins of the World, and this he declared as soon as Man had sin'd, and continued to inculcate this Goodness in the minds of Men by his Prophets, who continually declare the mercy of God which should appear to bring Salvation; this is what Abraham believed, and 'twas imputed unto him for Righteousness, for he saw the Day, and was Glad: This was it that was typified by the Ceremonies of the Law, that every time they Sacrificed and Worshipped in the Temple, they might have something to put them in mind of their Messia, whom they expected, and who was called the Wonderful Counsel, or the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; that his Office was to visit and redeem his People. Thus did God prepare the way for his Son, that we might reverence him, and though his Dignity was thus great, yet he was to be rejected and despised by Men, smitten of God, that the Chastisement of our Peace might be upon him, and by his Stripes we might be Healed. This indeed was wonderfull, and what proved a stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Gentiles, and what they who in this Age continue to deny the

The Preface.

Lord who bought them, think very Ridiculous: But however merry these Gentlemen of that Perswasion are with the price of their Salvation, I believe it would startle them to have it seriously put to them, whether they renounce the merits of that Cross which they despise, or the Name into which they were Baptized; we are certain it can be no jesting matter, if the Scriptures don't err concerning Him, for they tell us, he died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, and that without him, we have no life in us; that he is our Advocate, and was made a propitiation for our Sins, and yet that he was from Eternity; for he came down from Heaven, and was in the Beginning, and was with God, and was God, and yet became Flesh, and dwelt among us, that even in this State, he was worthy of Divine Honour, by virtue of that Union in him, of the Divine and Humane Nature that he was Alpha and Omega; that in the beginning he laid the Foundations of the Earth, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy; therefore let us take heed to the things which we have heard, least at any time we let them slip, and then, How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation? And who then can deny that this Jesus, as the Scriptures explain it, is God manifest in the Flesh, to whom be Glory for ever. And yet there are a sort of Men, who set up themselves in contradiction to this Mystery of Godliness, and fancy by searching, they can find out the Almighty to perfection, who pride themselves in Reason, and think it a disparagement for any thing to be above their Knowledge.
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The Preface.

They are so refin'd in their Notions, that they can see no difference between a thing, being above their reason, and being contrary to it: They are so great Masters, that not to understand a thing, or its being repugnant in its self are the same thing, for with them all is Non-science and contradiction, which they don't comprehend; when at the same time they can't give an account of themselves, and yet would be thought to understand every thing else. The Scripture more particularly is their Talent, and if we can believe them, there is nothing like a Mystery in it, but they can easily comprehend all, or as easily deny: That our Saviour was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and Born of a Virgin is positive in the Scriptures, but what they never yet made easie to our conceptions, but in such a manner as gives the lie to the Prediction, and wretchedly perverts the Sense of the Scripture, by leaving it more perplex'd and above our reach than 'tis of it self. That he was the express Image of the Father, and therefore to him every Knee should bow, that all Power in Heaven and Earth was given unto him, and therefore if we do not believe in him shall be Damn'd. That he came out from God, and that he and the Father are one, and therefore is able to hear our Prayers, and has promised if we ask of him he will give us, and yet that took upon him the form of a Servant, is what God has Testified, and what he thought was not too much for our sake, though in himself he thought it not Rebery to be equal with God, and of this there are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy

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The Preface

ly Ghost, and that these three are one; and into this truth are we commanded to be Baptized, for 'twas his will that all Nations should be Taught and Baptized in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; these are all infallible Truths, whether they understand them or not, if they cannot, then there are Mysteries, and what they must believe without knowing any more than that God with whom all things are possible has said it, and if we would be saved must believe, that we have all sin'd and stand in need of a Saviour, is what our Reason and Scripture informs us; the Person and Dignity of this Saviour, the Scripture positively asserts, and if that be true, he could not be less than God that undertook our Redemption, and that had those peculiar attributes belonging to him; but how he the God-head and Man-hood was united in him, is not what his Wisdom has thought fit to reveal, and what our finite understanding is not capable of, and what is not necessary to our Salvation that we should know, but believe: So that the Controversie seems to be this, whether God can oblige us to believe what we can't comprehend? And whether he has not obliged us already to a Faith which must be obedient to his word, till they can prove to our reason, that either of these are untrue or impossible? Let it suffice us to hold fast the Faith in which we are bred up, and only believe as much as God has been pleased to reveal, and have regard to what the Scripture say concerning him, through whom we are to have everlasting Life. Thus much is certain, and what I think to be an unanswer-
ble

The Preface.

able Argument, and a just account of the Christian Belief, which a Great Divine of our Church has lately offer'd. That the Foundation of the Doctrine of the Trinity is this; First, That there can be but one God; Secondly, That there is nothing in God, but what is God; Thirdly, That there can be no composition in the Deity with any such positive real Being distinct from the Deity it self. But the Church finding in Scripture mention of three to whom distinctly the God-head belongs, expressed these three by the Name of Persons, and stated their Personality upon three distinct Modes of substance allotted to one and the same God-head, and these also distinguished from one another by three distinct Relations.

And now what designs these Traducers of the Lord of Glory can intend, by puzzelling themselves and every Body else with their pretensions to more Reason than God has given them, I can't imagine, unless under the disguise of Charity to our Reason, they would subvert our Religion, and by pretending to bring the sublime Truths of God's Word to our understanding, they would Ridicule the hidden things of God, and so open a way for Atheism and Infidelity, by denying first that there is any thing which our reason can't comprehend, and then that there is nothing in the Scripture, but what can easily be understood. This is to make our Reason, not the Scripture a rule of Salvation, and when once our sense is to judge of these Divine Truths, all of them that we can^{not} give a Mathematical Account of,
must

The Preface.

must be rejected: And yet that there are such truths of which they can have no Idea is certain, and after all, they must own, that either they are not to be understood, and yet believed, or else that they are Non-sence and contradiction, which is an impudence they dare not publicly own; and what would be fatal to their designs; for the Socinian needs only appear in his proper Colour, to make him abhor'd and rejected by all, and lookt upon as an Enemy to God, Religion and the common sence of Mankind.

Quakers

But there is yet another sort, who pretend an Obedience to the Gospel of Christ, and yet make that easie rule of Salvation so confus'd and perplex'd, that either they dare not, or cannot give an account of their Faith. Their principles, if they have any, are as unaccountable to themselves as to the World, and they agree in nothing so much as to oppose the plain sense of the Scripture; that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are positive Institutions, the one to be perform'd by Water in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and the other by Bread and Wine, in remembrance of our Saviour's Death and Sufferings, are as plainly and positively commanded, as any one thing in the Scripture. That the Apostles and primitive Christians made it their Practise, is capable of the same proof as the Scriptures themselves; they went about Preaching the Lord Jesus, and Baptising all that believed in his Name, and the condition of Salvation in those days, was Faith, Repentance and Baptism; that to strengthen People

The Preface.

in their Faith, they meet on the first day in the Week to break Bread, and St. Paul is very careful to instruct our Behaviour, that we might receive the Bread of the Lord worthily.

*Yet notwithstanding this, as if an aukend Gravity, and sullenness of Behaviour were to pass for Authority, they pretend by a New Light to another understanding of the Scripture, and impudently pervert that Sense which the Christian Church for 1600 Years and more submitted too. So unwilling are they to go to Heaven in the steps of their Fathers, that they prefer every wild Enthusiastick Notion to the written Word of God, and so fearful of following the Examples of Tradition that each Man sets up for a Rule to himself; they have no Priests as well as no Sacraments, no settled constitution of a Church, and are so little observers of St. Paul's Command, to do all things with Decency and Order, as if he did not speak it by the Spirit, but to gratifie his own Superstition; they live as if the Gospel was all Privilege, and no Duty, are Enemies to a form in Divine Worship, and in spite of the Scripture which commands Women to be in silence, will needs have them for Speakers among them; thus do they play at cross purposes with the Word of God, and by their Obstinancy and Fantasticalness, make it of none effect. But there is an Argument against them, which they never thought fit to answer, and till they can, must be thought Enemies to the Gospel of Christ: An Ordinance once enjoyn'd and never repeal'd, is still in force; but Baptism
by*

The Preface.

by Water was once enjoyn'd, but never repeal'd: Ergo, and so of the Lord's Supper, and what ever else is accounted an Ordinance in the Church of God, and all that lies upon us to prove, is, That what we assert is an Ordinance, and was enjoyn'd by lawful Authority; and this is what the Scriptures prove themselves, and what has been strengthen'd by the Arguments and Practise of the Church down to this day. So that if there is any such thing as Unbelievers, false Teachers, and deniers of the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, we may find them in this wretched Sect of pretenders to Christianity.

But now among these who have no knowledge of the Truth, or hold it in Unrighteousness, or put Godliness into a Form to draw the ridicule and scorn of the World; its no wonder to meet with them Debauch'd, or fill'd with Pride; Conceit and Devillishness, or Deceitful, trusting in themselves Hypocrites, turning the truth of God into a lie. But that we who are Born in a Nation, where the true Religion is Established by Law, and have all the Advantages which God can give us to make us Happy. Our Church teaching us the form of sound Words once deliver'd to the Saints, and makes the Word of God her Rule of Faith, the Example of the Apostles and Primitive Fathers her Guide, and her constitution such as Decency directs, that we in the midst of such assistances should fail of the end of Creation, and in the spite of God's Grace and Mercy, deprive our selves of everlasting Happiness, by living in Disobedience to this Church, in contradiction to the word of God,
and

The Preface.

and in defiance of what our reason tells us is both our interest and duty. Whence is this hardness of heart, that Men forget they were Baptised, and live as if they never heard of Religion? Let us all put the Question to our selves, and see whether one Reason of this Stupidity and Wickedness is not from our Neglect, in the Education of those committed to our Charge.

We are dedicated to God and Religion as soon as Born, according to the command of our Saviour; but since most of us are brought to the Church, when through our tender Years we are not capable to judge nor perform what is required of us. The Church according to an Ancient Prescription has appointed Sureties in our behalf; they solemnly Engage for us till we come to an Age that we are able to take care of our selves. Whence is it then, that notwithstanding this Prudent care of the Church, so few are bred up to those Pious Rules prescribed in our Baptism, and how many less when they come to Age, think themselves bound to perform what was vow'd in their Names. Do they who are God-fathers perform their part? Do they endeavor early to instruct their Children, and inform them to what advantages they are Born, that they promised by them who are their Sureties to perform their duty to God and their Neighbour; that now they are able, they are to be accountable for their own Actions, and take upon them that Solemn Engagement to Fight under Christ's Banner, and to resist the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and to believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith. Thus much is certainly incumbent upon such as under-
take

The Preface.

take for Infants at least, that they put the Parents in mind to do it for them, so that there is no such difficulty that should discourage any from so charitable a Work, but there is danger for those who take it upon them with no design, but to comply with the custom, but not to inform them of good and Evil; and, Oh, how happy should we be, if when we first came to the knowledge of Good and Evil, that we could so persue the Good, that God may not deny us the privilege of tasting of the Tree of Life also.

Do they who are Parents perform their part by confirming the Advice of the God-fathers to their Children, in adding both their Precept and Example. The Church has appointed God-fathers to be as Monitors, but 'tis they that will be accountable for the mismanagement of their Children, for they have a constant Eye over them, and their Authority last as long as their lives, and if thro' their Negligence, their Children are lost, their Blood will be required at their hands. 'Twas a severe Judgment upon Old Eli, for not maintaining the right of a Parent in the correction of his Sons, tho' he was not altogether silent at their wickedness, but mild in his reproof, and yet God removed from him the Priest-hood for ever. But how many are there that don't say so much as he did? My Sons, ye do not well to make the Lords's People to Transgress, but are rather encouraging them in their Vices, or silent at their Wickedness. Good God, that Men should desire Children to make them miserable! Surely it concerns us as much as it did the Jews, to bring them up in the fear and Nature of the Lord,

The Preface.

Lord. Why should we be cautious in our Admonitions, when 'tis our Duty, and their Interest, to hear and to obey; and we have this for our Encouragement, if they are disobedient, the Laws of the Land are ready to our assistance in the punishment of Wickedness and Vice, and we have this Negative Power, to restrain them from being very bad, if we can't make them very Good.

We are born into a World full of Temptations and Miseries, and tho' God has pronounced it good, as the work of his hands, yet we are so prone to do amiss, that we scarce arrive to the power of acting, but we incline to pervert that Blessing, and make that our Curse, which was design'd our Happiness. 'Tis the Goodness and Mercy of God that we are created with a power to Will, and he has placed in us such an inclination to good, as may be infinitely improved by getting in us the upper-band of Evil, and a power to overcome the subtilties of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; let us then make use of this Power which God has given us, and they who are Young, look up to God to preserve their Innocence; and they who are so unhappy as to have been overtaken by the Enemy of Mankind, let them now at length call their ways to remembrance, and turn their face unto God's Testimonies; to this end, let them according to the Direction of a great Man:

First, Consider what they have done amiss.
Secondly, What is fitting for them now to do.
Thirdly, If they do it not, what the end of their neglect will be.

This Examination consists in a review of their past life, as to their Actions, all that they have left un-
done,

The Preface.

done, as well as done; as to their Faith, whatever they disbelieved that is true, or believed that is amiss; and this is no easie task, it requires Time and Pains, Zeal and Constancy, if their own Education has not given them the advantage of directing themselves, let them address themselves to some discreet Minister;—let us first consider the necessity of Repentance, and then the difficulties, and they are more than we can presently imagin. Our lusts are not to be conquer'd by a Sigh, a Tear, or a Resolution, when we are in a fit of Devotion; but let the difficulty be greater than our imagination, we must resolve to undertake the Combate, and root out every habit and disposition to sin: In order to it, let us first know what is fitting for us to believe, and then what is fit for our practice; for if we build upon a true Foundation, our Faith will direct us to work out our Salvation by a true Repentance; if we suffer our selves to be deceiv'd by any known sin, we are not in safety, and 'tis not Repentance when we repeat our Wickedness, and we have not conquer'd our lusts till we are able to resist them; he who thinks he may go to Heaven, because he is Honest in the main, or is one the world calls a Moral Man, is in danger of Eternal Ruin; the Young Man in the Gospel had kept all the Commandments from his Youth, and yet lacked one thing needfull to make him perfect; and the reason of this purity is plain, for the same dispositions which we have when we leave this World, will follow us to the next; we are mistaken if we suppose that with this Body we shall put off the body of sin; or, because we die in a fit of Devotion, that

God

The Preface.

God will accept of this last part of our life, and not account for the rest. Our Souls will have the same affections in the other World, as here, for there can be no alteration, as the Tree falls so it lies, and if we resolve not to endeavour a change till Death approach us, and think that our Reflections upon a Sick-bed are sufficient to atone a mispent life, we shall be miserably deceived: It is certain indeed that a true Repentance, though never so late will be accepted, but who can be certain that he shall truly repent at a time when he is not fit for the ordinary Offices of life, when his Soul is upon the Wing, and ready to take its flight into another World. Repentance includes more then can be done in such a dreadful Extremity; it implies not only that part which many endeavour at that time to act, by moving all about them with their Tears and Resolutions, but an absolute change in their whole Man. Who can satisfy himself that his heart is right towards God, when he has not an opportunity to try and examine his sincerity? Can any Man be secure that if he should live, that his Vices would not return with his Health, since 'twas necessity, not choice, that drove him to these new Resolutions; and if he cannot, what unanswerable folly is it to defer what reason and every Man's Conscience suggest ought presently to be done; let us then not truit to uncertainty, but since God gives an opportunity to be happy, not make our selves miserable; let us cast off the Old Man with his Deeds, and betake our selves to a newness of life; and to enable us in this work, let us set our Faces towards the Altar of God, for 'tis there we are to receive strength and comfort, and every good thing. This

The Preface.

It is what we obliged our selves to at our Baptism, and since we have lived unworthy of the First Sacrament, let us in Humiliation and Repentance approach the Second, that our sins may be blotted out, and we may be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Light; and now if any ask what preparation we ought to make, I answer: I know of no other than what I have endeavour'd to perswade, and what is necessary and reasonable, even a true Faith and Repentance; that the Sacrament is a Duty, is generally acknowledg'd, yet through mistakes there are abundance neglect it. Our Saviour was very particular in this Order to his Disciples, and his Apostles devoutly press it in all their Writings; and the Ancients received it as an inestimable Blessing. We are told, that unless we Eat Christ's Body, and drink his Blood, we have no life in us, and that this is to be done by Bread and Wine in the Holy Communion, is what the Apostles and generality of Mankind down to this Age have believed. Christ, when he gave it them, told them, it was his Body, and St. Paul directs our Behaviour, that we might not receive it unworthily, but discern it as the Lord's Body, and therefore first, to Examine our selves, and then Eat of that Bread, and Drink of that Cup, what then should hinder our approaches to this Holy Banquet; that we are wicked is no excuse; for why are we not otherwise; that we are affraid, because of our unworthiness; if there is no other reason but our fear, is no Excuse. For 'tis not the sense of our unworthiness that should hinder us, but our resolution, or unwillingness, to be otherwise, and that indeed will make us unworthy for ever;
for,

The Preface.

for, where shall we be washed, if not in this Fountain which is opened for Sin and Uncleanness? If none but such as are perfect could approach this Holy Table, who then would venture to come near? And what can we think of our Saviour, that could propose a Snare to endanger our Ruin? No, it was ordain'd for such as had a sense of their Unworthiness, and were sensible of their load, but desired to be eased of their heavy burthen; Well, but they who come to the Sacrament are obliged to live stricter lives than other Men, and some are afraid they can't conform to an exactness of Conversation. Why are they not as well afraid, that because they don't lead such lives, that they shall be punished, which would be an argument to put them upon that Tryal, and when once they saw the pleasantness of the paths of Righteousness, they would endeavour to persevere in them? Besides, they are not obliged, but to lead such lives as is necessary to Salvation, and how dares any Man that believes another World do less? There is danger indeed in unworthy Receiving, and there is as great a danger in staying away, both of them are a contempt of the Lord's Body, and will receive their reward; in short, whatever our Scruples are that hinder us from this Ordinance, let us with all speed endeavour to remove them, for there is no excuse for our Absence, nor any objection, but what may easily be answered, if we are sincere in our inquiries; 'tis the neglect of this Sacrament that is the cause of our coldness in Religion, and I can't tell how it comes to pass, that tho' the Church and State requires all that are at the Age of Sixteen to communicate at least three times in the Year, that there is not one in a Town and observe the

The Preface.

order ; there are a great many considerate persons that never seem to have a desire after it, till they come upon their Death-bed, and then are willing to have it to conduct them to Heaven. The Ancient Church refused to Administer to any that had not received it before, and if the discipline was maintained, it would make us more circumspect ; for a great many think if they can have the Minister to pray by them, and give them the Sacrament, all will be well : But if they who refused it in their Health, were deny'd it upon their Death-bed, it would be a dreadful warning to others not to neglect it, and those Ministers who venture now to Administer it, transgress the Rubrick in this case ; but 'tis as indiscreet to trust to This now, as to depend upon a Repentance, begun at such a time which is hardly possible to be sincere, and if not, they are lost for ever ; there are the same Arguments to bring Men to the Sacrament, as there are to perswade them to a newness of life, without both we are not assured of Salvation, and he that pretends to lead a life according to God's Holy Word, and yet refuses to eat of the Bread which came down from Heaven, how can he hope to be raised up at the last day ? The truth on't is, Men are not willing to part with their Lusts, and as long as they are in that mind, they do well to stay away, but do very ill to continue in such a resolution ; but what shall we say, if neither Promise, or Threats, Rewards or Punishments, Heaven or Hell, will perswade Men to forsake their sins, nothing will ; however we must never be weary in well doing, and 'tis our Duty to exhort one another daily, which was the chief inducement of this, Advice to those which never Receiv'd the Sacrament,

The Preface.

crament, and this I thought I cou'd not do in a better manner than by shewing, First, the unreasonableness of Sin, and then, Secondly, the necessity of Repentance; to this end I have collected a form of Devotion which may be useful in our Conversion, and when we are so happy as to be sensible of the folly of our ways, that we can set before us the difficulty of returning, and yet dare venture thro' all hardships to attain Salvation. I thought it necessary to add some Arguments to oblige us to that Duty, which is our interest to comply with, and which will strengthen our resolutions in Piety; to these Directions, I have collected another form of preparatory Devotions to be used at any time before we approach the Sacrament, and left it to the Reader's Discretion to use as much of it, and as often as he pleases. That our behaviour in the Church might be answerable to the Solemnity, there is appointed a large Form of Devotion, and I have endeavoured to range them in a suitable Order, that every Prayer having a particular relation to what we are then a doing, our Minds might be more moved; and our Souls thus ascending with our Devotions, we may pray by the Spirit, and the understanding also. I'm very willing to believe, that all who come to this Holy Table, endeavour to be as devout as they can, and 'tis possible, fancy themselves very Zealous, if they prescribe their thoughts to that which is good in general, and no doubt 'tis very well if they have so much victory over themselves, as to curb their thoughts and desires; but if by any other helps they can arrive yet farther, and not only when they enter the Church, leave the thoughts of the World behind, but can place such as are suitable
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The Preface.

in their room, 'tis not only their vertue, but duty ; we are to consider that we are come to remember Christ, and that all our Thoughts ought to bend themselves to such holy Meditations ; we should as much as possible pry into these Mysteries which the Angels desire to look into, and thus by not only taking words with us when we enter the House of God, but directions for our Thoughts too, we might not be in danger to offer up the sacrifice of Fools. To these Devotions in the Church I have added some for our behaviour at Home, for 'tis necessary to keep our affections in a heat afterwards, as to kindle them before ; besides, I had this design in it, to inform some, who by their practise don't seem to know any more, than that we are to be serious while we are about this Solemnity, and as soon as 'tis over, forget their Resolutions and the Obligations they have put upon themselves, by Eating and Drinking before the Lord. We come there to receive Grace to help up to perform our Resolutions of amendment, as well as to receive pardon for our past Offences, and unless we come with this design, we can have no Absolution, and I would to God, that we all did approach this Table with such Resolutions : In order to it this Collection of Devotions is humbly offer'd, and if it shall please God to make it an instrument, but to convert one sinner, or add a zeal to any sincere Christian, it will abundantly recompence my trouble, and to God alone be the Praise.

Advice

ADVICE

To those who never Receiv'd the

Sacrament, &c.

OUR Saviour has propos'd *Two Sacraments*, as necessary to Salvation, and the Church of *England* has taken care in her Chatechism to instruct those bred in her Communion to perform both, according to the Command of her great Lawgiver: So that as soon as we are taught to Read, we may learn our Duty to God, our Neighbor, and our selves, and this for a very wise reason, that Religion may grow up with us, that we mayn't be to learn our Duty when we should practise it. But 'tis the unhappiness of a great many People, that they could give a better account of their Faith when they were Children, than at the Age of Discretion. They invert the Example of the Apostle, when they are become men, begin to take upon
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2 **Advice to those who never**

them the Childish things; they think what was taught them in their Youth was only fitting for Children to know, and don't become the study of their graver years, till their neglect brings them almonst to that necessity, of going to School to learn Wisdom from Babes, and get understanding from them that have hardly any knowledge: They have not only forgot what is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper, but are ignorant of the meaning of it too. This is owing in great measure to the general neglect of Religion; we live without concern, have no other Thoughts but for the present, suffer our selves to be hurried on by our perverted Inclinations, and are without God in the World. So miserably do we expose our selves by folly, and inconsideration that we neither think of our Condition here nor hereafter; and because we are so Mad to live like Brutes, to fancy we shall perish like them that have no Understanding, but let us not deceive our Souls, Religion is no *Chimera*, and Heaven is worth thinking on. For this end we came into the World, and what is so manifestly our Duty, ought to be
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be the business of our lives. *They who have neglected, or are ignorant of it, ought to inform themselves, and be convinced of their Sin and Disobedience.* No man ought to think himself too Old, or Wise, to be instructed; especially in Religion we may always be improving, and when interest joins with our Duty it should be no hard matter to persuade us into a compliance. There are very few but are persuaded in themselves of the reasonableness of Religion, and intend at one time or other to become Religious; they hope they shall live to a good Old Age, and then grow weary of the World, and its Vices together; but can they think when they are fit for nothing else, they are capable to do God good Service: So unreasonable are some Mens expectations, though they come in at the last hour, and are past their labor too, yet hope to stand upon the same Terms with those that have born the heat of the day, and think God a hard Master, if he should discount for their Idleness. Though they can't complain with the Servant in the Gospel, that God reaps where he does not sow, for they tacitly confess 'tis in their own power to im-

4 Advice to those who never

prove their Talent, but are unwilling God should have too much interest: They are sensible their time is given them to work out their Salvation, but suppose a small part will suffice for that, therefore reserve it for the last thing, that at least they may conclude well; but if the night should come on before they have finished, they must not be angry at that dismal surpris; they knew their Master's will, and must submit to be punish'd for their neglect with weeping and gnashing of Teeth.

We all have an inclination to be Happy, and accordingly pursue whatever we think leads to Satisfaction; the only Unhappiness is, we are apt to be mistaken, and place our Felicity in things which profit nothing; we naturally adhere to a sensible good, fancy that Religion ties us up from those Delights, and therefore desire to be excused, and left to our own Enjoyments. There is little hopes of Mens growing wiser, till they are better reconciled to *Religion*; 'tis the Devil's subtilty to represent its Precepts impracticable, and in so loose an Age, when Men give themselves up to Ease and Luxury. Nothing appears so terrible as the
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taking up the Cross, but if Men could be perswaded to suspend their Opinion, till they become capable of giving judgment, we might hope to see nothing bear so great a Character, as the *Beauties of Religion*: We are required to deny our selves nothing that is fit for wise Men to do, and are generally so fond of that Epithet, its a wonder we don't endeavour to deserve it. None so really can lay claim to it, as they who have the fear of God before their Eye; ; for *the fear of the Lord, that is, Wisdom, and to depart from Evil, Understanding*. They have the greatest share of Knowledge, whose conversation is in Heaven, and study in the Gospel of Christ: There we learn those wondrous Truths which puts Philosophy to a stand, and renders the Wisdom of this World foolishness. There we may learn what God has done for us, and what we ought to do for our selves, could we be so happy as to be govern'd by our Reason, to let our thoughts have there proper place, we should in a little time perceive that we were not sent hither to gaze about us, that we have immortal Souls to be taken care of, that the greatest Age is

but a few days, and all the Pleasures of this World momentary and deceitful, that if we all could rejoice in the days of our Youth, yet we must be brought to Judgment; could we but think of these things, we should find enough to do, to secure our interest in Heaven, and may conveniently dispence with the Vanities of this World; for besides the evil of them, they take us off of the contemplation of much better things. He that has God and Eternity upon his Mind, has infinite variety to employ his Thoughts. The most exquisite Wits have subject for their Fancies, and the ignorant may be improving in true Wisdom.

'Tis our misfortune to suffer the love of this World to prevail upon us, and till we have something more lovely to remove our Affections, can't easily give a Bill of Divorce. Our Passions are strong, and when we have habituated our selves to the love of any one thing, can't quickly put a curb to our desires; we talk of Heaven but at a distance, think it sufficient to take up with those pleasures, when we can enjoy these no longer we are sure of the present, and have a
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mistrust either that the future will not come, or that they are not worth the exchange, that we should deny our selves a familiar satisfaction for uncertain expectations. 'Tis from such reasons we are deluded, and though we dare not speak out, are such fools as to mistrust in our hearts the truth of these things. In short, 'tis the want of Faith, we are not fully convinced of the existence of a Deity, or that there is a Providence in the World. This proceeds from the want of consideration, we dont allow our selves time to think, but take it upon trust, we don't endeavour to reconcile it to our Reason, and having no conviction in our minds grow indifferent, at last come to that degree of wickedness as to cast off all thoughts of God and Religion.

This is certainly the Case of too many: And even among those who are more fully persuaded of these things; that believe there is a God, and a Judgment to come, we find a prodigious Neglect; and have nothing but their Words, to incline us to believe they ever heard of the *Christian Religion*. Indeed, they come to Church once a Week, hear *Jesus Christ* preach'd, and

that they must depend upon his Merits to be saved. This they are willing to believe, if God will accept them upon that Condition ; for they do not care to be concern'd in the *Working out their Salvation* ; but are free to let our *Saviour* have the Honour of Conducting them to *Heaven*, if they may be exempt from the Severity of *Fear and Trembling* : They can heartily believe any thing that favours their Interest, and are very desirous of getting into *Paradise* by *Faith*, if God will excuse them from *Good Works*. But this we must not believe ; for we are as certain as there is a God, that *no unrighteous Man shall see his Face* ; nor any Man, without *Repentance*, and a *true Faith* in *Jesus Christ*. *Except we repent, we shall all likewise perish* : And *unless we believe that Jesus is the Christ, shall be damned*. True *Repentance* is a hearty Sorrow for Sin past, and a serious Resolution to amend our Lives for the future. *True Faith* will be shewn by our *Works* ; for if we believe in him, we shall keep his *Commandments*. We cannot think that God made us for nothing ; and was at the Expence of so great a Miracle, only to furnish witty Men with Matter for a strange Story. There

There must be something more in Sin, than we imagine ; and the Provocations of the Wicked must be exceeding abominable. It must be of a prodigious Nature, that could so incense a merciful God, that nothing less than the Sacrifice of his Son could expiate. Can we think the *Work of our Redemption* of so little value, that it is not to be considered ? Oh ! let the Consideration of this move us to be grateful to the *exceeding Love of Christ* : Let us glorifie God in our Lives ; and let not the *Price of his Blood* be utterly lost : Let the Time past of our Lives suffice for the *Works of Iniquity* ; and let us *break off our Sins by Repentance, and turn to the Lord our God*. To which End, let us call our selves to a severe Account, and examine the Errour of our Ways ; let us humble our selves in Fasting and Prayer, beg Pardon for our Offences, and Strength to withstand the Assaults of the Devil, and our Inclinations ; for *till we are thus purified, we expect the Grace of God in vain*. Christ will not come into a filthy Habitation ; and while our Bodies are unclean, the *Holy Ghost* will not erect his Temple there. How necessary is it then to begin our *Repentance*

tance speedily ; to day, while it is called to day, lest any of us be harden'd through the Deceitfulness of Sin ? Sin is very bewitching ; and when it has got the Mastery, is not easily resisted. Habits require a great deal of Pains to unlearn ; especially, when they are such as cause us not only to take pleasure in them our selves, but delight in those who do the same thing : They are then become mighty *Dallia's*, dearer to us than our Eyes or Limbs ; we can much rather part with either than our Lusts : Of such mighty force are they, that we not only loose our Strength, but Reason ; and are led Captives wheresoever they will. A Man thus overcome, is miserable indeed ; for he is not only under the Power of the Devil, and his own unruly Lusts ; but has God for his Enemy : And where can he then flee for Succour ? How dreadfully must his Soul be shaken, when his Conscience begins to suggest all things are not well within, that there is a Necessity of a speedy Alteration ; that his Impieties are daring, and grown to such a height as cannot be thought on without Horrour and Confusion ; when he can neither put off these Reflections, or bear the

the Trial of the Prospect! The first Sight renders him monstrous; and the Continuance, exceeding frightful! It casts him into a thoughtless, yet amazing Condition, and leaves him under the Pressure of a wounded Spirit! Such are generally the Conflicts of those that have submitted to the Yoke of *Satan*, when they first come to themselves: And no Man that believ'd the Torture of this Condition, would put himself under so dreadful a Necessity. Alas! these are but the Beginning of Sorrows; there is *Eternity* behind, and *Hell*, the *Habitation of the Wicked for ever*, unless this Sense of Sin drives us to *Repentance* and *Reformation*. But 'tis uncertain whether we shall come thus to our selves, till *Death* overtake us; or, since we resolv'd to sin till we could sin no longer, whether there will be Place found for our Tears. Therefore let every Man call his Ways to remembrance: But they who are thus enslav'd in Sin, let them make haste to deliver themselves from the *Wrath to come*; their Case is very dangerous, they seem to be destin'd to Destruction; for they have so long suffer'd their Lusts to have Dominion over them, that they know

not how to free themselves from this *Tyranny of Sin*. But blessed be God, who has provided a *Lamb for the Sacrifice*, there is yet a Way for our *Redemption*; God has not wholly left us without Help in this World. Though the *Prayers of the Wicked are an Abomination*, yet those of the Penitent are not so. If we are so happy as to stop in this Career, have but so much Resolution to begin a *Reformation*, God is so merciful as to add his Grace to help us forward to *Repentance*: But 'tis only when God sees us set about it in earnest, for he knows our Hearts and Thoughts long before.

Therefore let us embrace the first Thoughts of *Repentance*, and carry them on to a sincere *Reformation*: Let us retire from the World, and humble ourselves in *Fasting*; and this not once or twice, but often; for we have need to cry mightily to God, Day and Night, to be *redeem'd* from this worse than *Egyptian Bondage*. On the Day of our *Humiliation*, that the Misery of our Condition may oblige us to the greater *Penitence*, let us first consider the Odiousness of Sin, that we may learn to detest it; the Aggravation of it, by being
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committed frequently, presumptuously, and against Knowledge ; that we may abhor our selves for our *Folly* and *Ingratitude*. Then let us reflect upon the Number of them ; which being infinite, ought to lay us in the Dust, and confess our selves to be worse than nothing.

Reflections of a true Penitent upon his first Conviction.

‘ **O** God ! to what an amazing, and miserable Condition have I brought my self ! I stand exposed to thy *Severest Judgment* here ; and am liable to thy *Indignation* hereafter. I know, I am not in a *State of Salvation*, and yet can’t lament my *Misery*. I am a *Sinner*, and reflect upon the evil Consequence of *Sin* ; yet am neither *Terrified*, or *Sorrowfull*. What a heap of Contradiction and Wickedness am I made up of, that believe the *Pleasures* of thy *Law*, and yet depart from thy *Commandments* ; that fear the *Justice* of thy *Anger*, and yet can’t be perswaded to forsake the *Evil* of my *Ways*. Thus miserable, O God, do I behold my self ; but thou
‘ see’st

' seeſt, that I am infinitely more vile than
 ' I can imagine; Though my Crimes ap-
 ' pear to me beyond my expreſſion, and
 ' my Heart thus condemns me, *thou art*
 ' *greater than my Heart, and knoweſt all*
 ' *things*. Thou knoweſt how often each
 ' Sin has been repeated, and the vileness
 ' of that Sin; and how much more
 ' heinous, by the habitual Repetition,
 ' when my *Depraved Nature* will neither
 ' let me know the *Baseneſs* of the one, or
 ' the *Ingratitude* of the other. I am in-
 ' ſenſible how much thou art offended by
 ' one Sin, and am forgetfull how often
 ' I have repeated that Offence, and can
 ' only tell that Sin in me is above meaſure
 ' ſinful. O! that there was a Heart in
 ' me even to apprehend this! that I cou'd
 ' ſay with a ſincere Heart, and penſive
 ' Soul, *Lord, I am a miſerable Sinner*.
 ' But this is not in my power; I can only
 ' reflect upon my Sins at a diſtance, as
 ' if they did not concern me, and my
 ' poor Soul was not to answer for them
 ' at thy *Tribunal*. O God, thy Hand
 ' is heavy upon me, I know my Sins are
 ' abominable in thy Sight, and that thy
 ' *Judgment* inflicts this *Hardneſs of Heart*,
 ' and that thou art reſolved to try me no
 ' longer. Thou ſeeſt that I am Ground-
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'ed in Wickedness, that evil is continually
 'with me, that if thou shou'dst forgive,
 'I shall revolt again, and wherefore
 'shoudst thou withhold thine Hand.
 'O my God, I have nothing to offer to
 'put a Stop to thy *Vindictive Justice*; but
 'confess, I deserve *Eternal Damnation*:
 'But who can be content to dwell in
 '*Everlasting Burnings*? Is there then no
 'Way to escape thy *Vengeance*? Wilt thou
 'be angry for ever? Yes, O God; un-
 'less I *repent*, thou wilt bring me to worse
 'than nothing; for thou wilt condemn
 'me to *Eternal Torment*. How can I re-
 'pent, unless thou change my Nature,
 'and give me a Heart to be sorry, and
 'abhor the *Evil of my Ways*? But why
 'should I expect this Mercy, that have
 'abus'd all others. I can't look up to
 'thee with any Confidence, to beg thee
 'to have Patience with me; for my
 '*Prayers* must be an Abomination, and
 'my *Devotions* no way pleasing in thy
 'Sight: Oh! the *Misery* that I have
 'brought my self into, God has with-
 'drawn himself, and taken his *Holy Spi-*
 '*rit* from me; there remains only, that
 'I be reserv'd against the *Revelation* of
 'that Day, in which the *Righteous Judg-*
 '*ments* of God will appear, to condemn
 me

' me, and all such *ungrateful Souls*, to the
 ' *Torments of Hell*. Righteous art thou, O
 ' Lord ; and in the midst of *Flames* will
 ' I confess thy *Justice*. *Fear* is come up-
 ' on me ; and thy *Judgment* is the severer,
 ' in that I am not sensible of the *Danger*.
 ' Wilt thou laugh at this my *Calami-*
 ' *ty*? And shall not mine Eyes be open,
 ' till the *Flames of Hell* terrifie them?
 ' Wilt thou suffer me thus to sink
 ' down into *Torment* ; and despise the
 ' *Groans* of a *Soul* in an *Abyss of Misery*?
 ' Oh, I cou'd be content to yield to thy
 ' severest *Inflictions* here, if I cou'd be
 ' brought to the favour of God : But I
 ' dare not ask of *Thee* to correct me,
 ' least thou do it in *Judgment* ; and yet
 ' I dread thy *Rod* that it will come, and
 ' how can I bear to fall into the *Hands*
 ' of the *Living God*. Who can deliver me
 ' from thy *Power*, Oh, thou *Omnipotent*
 ' *God*? What can I do when *Misery* thus
 ' abounds, and each *Reflection* presents
 ' *Damnation* to my view? Surely, if I
 ' was truly affected with my *Condition*,
 ' it would work upon my *Spirit*, and
 ' when my *Soul* was sensible of *Sin*, and
 ' how bitter a thing it is to depart from
 ' God, it would cause such *Relentings*
 ' and *Tremblings*, such *Contrition* and *Hu-*
 ' *miliation*,

* *miliat*ion, as becomes a Soul loaded
 * with my *Crimes*. Oh, that my *Consci-*
 * *ence* wou'd rise up against me; and call
 * me to the strictest Account, that my
 * Soul was wounded within me. That I
 * had the fear of an angry God deeply
 * imprinted upon my Soul; Oh, that
 * I was a sorrowful *Sinner*. Oh, that
 * I could grieve as never Man griev'd;
 * but alas, 'tis not in my power thus
 * to afflict my self, and what would it
 * avail me if I could wrack my *Soul*,
 * and put my Nature into terrible *Con-*
 * *licts*. Can the *Sighs* and *Groans*,
 * and torturing *Convulsions* of such a
 * *Sinner*, move Compassion in the *Most*
 * *High*; will not God be Deaf to my
 * *Complaint*, and regardless of my
 * *Cries*? Is there then no Help, and
 * must I perish for Ever, *wherefore hast*
 * *thou made all Men for Naught*? Why
 * did thy Exuberant love express it self
 * to lost *Mankind* by such a wondrous
 * *Miracle*? Why didst thou empty thy
 * self, and come down among us, become
 * *Poor*, endure *Hardship*, *Cold* and *Ho-*
 * *ger*, and run through a *Sea of Blood*?
 * But to atone those *Crimes*, from
 * which Men nor Angels were able to
 * set us Free, to afford us that *Mersey*
 * C which

‘ which the justice of God would not
‘ allow of. Oh, my God, hast thou
‘ only excepted me, wilt thou be so
‘ severe with me who have most need
‘ of the satisfaction of my *Saviour* which
‘ was offer’d for a *Sinful World*. I am
‘ inexpressibly Miserable, and want to
‘ be sensible of my *Condition*, and will
‘ infinite Mercy refuse what the love
‘ of God came on purpose to do. Can
‘ my *Sins* come near the dimensions of
‘ thy Mercy? I own to my Confusion,
‘ I am as great a *Sinner* as a mortal
‘ Man can be; but ’tis neither beyond
‘ thy *Power*, nor unusual to thy *Mercy*
‘ to relieve such a matchless Object of
‘ Distress. I confess I’m not a penitent
‘ *Sinner*, but thou canst make me one;
‘ and though I want an humble and
‘ contrite *Spirit*, yet thou canst ena-
‘ ble me to offer up a *Sacrifice* that thou
‘ wilt not Despise. Oh, my abused
‘ *Jesus*, I fly to thee, thou mayst in-
‘ deed censure the Approach, but ’tis
‘ thy *Love*, thy *Mercy*, and my own *Un-*
‘ *worthiness* which drives me to thee;
‘ thou knowest I’m more unworthy
‘ then I think my self, but was I yet
‘ worse, I firmly believe thy *Blood* can
‘ cleanse me, and that the merit of thy
‘ *Cross*

Cross and Passion can cover my imperfections. Oh, Holy Spirit of God, inspire me with the humblest Soul and devoutest Affections, that I may apply my self to the Father of Mercies, and be made a fit Object for the God of comfort to relieve. O God the Father, O God the Son, O God the Holy Ghost; O Blessed Trinity have mercy upon me, a miserable Sinner.

We may reasonably suppose that a Man who has devoted himself to *Wickedness*, at the unburthening his *Conscience*, must entertain some such thoughts as these. 'Tis natural he should be divided betwixt *Hope* and *Fear*; the more he is sensible of his *Sins*, the greater his *Astonishment*. His *Humiliation* and mean Opinion of himself can't be two severe, if he keeps from *Despaire*; for after all, we can neither sufficiently know the evil of *Sin*, nor lament for committing it. The more we consider, the greater will be our *Aversion*, and when we have arriv'd to such a sense of *Sin*, as will beget in us a hatred to it, we may with more security promise an *Amendment*. But before we proceed to that, let us by the help of some

Catalogue. of *Sin* examine our Condition more fully, for the *Heart* is *deceitful*, and the *Memory* willing to forget what it is affraid to consider. Having laid before us such a Scheme, let us then beg of God to enable us in this work, that we main't deceive our *Souls*. Let us upon our *Knees* consider that we are now to Examine our selves of those things which we are to Answer at the *Day of Judgment*, if we don't Confess and Repent shall be miserable for ever, and that 'tis much better that we condemn our selves, than leave it to the Tribunal of a *just God*; therefore believing we are in the presence of God, as we certainly are at all times, but God is more especially present, when we are upon *Religious Duties*; let us say.

Oh, my God! hear the Voice of my humble *Petition* now I cry unto thee, and lift up my Hands to thy *mercy Seat*. Behold, *Lord*, now I am about to search into my own Heart, but alas, my Heart is *Deceitful* and desperately *Wicked*, how can I know it? Thou therefore that searchest the Heart and triest the Reins, discover to me all the evil and deceits of my own Heart, that I may

may Confess, Bewail and forsake them, and obtain mercy. *Lord hear me, Lord help me, for the merits of Jesus my Saviour, Amen.*

Oh, my Soul! Thou art now in the presence of the *Great Judge of Heaven and Earth*, before whose dreadful *Tribunal* thou must certainly appear at the day of *Judgment*, to give a strict Account of all thy Actions, of every idle Word, and every evil *Thought*, and thy own *Conscience* will then be thine *Accuser*.

Think, *O my Soul*, think if thou canst, what unimaginable Horrors will seize an impenitent Sinner, when the last *Trump* calls him out of his *Grave*, and Devils begin to drag him to God's *Judgment Seat*! What wou'd such a Wretch give to purchase one such opportunity of *Repentance*, as God now in great mercy gives thee; if ever thou hopest to escape those Horrors, *O my Soul*, make thy Peace with God, judge thy self here, least thou be Condemned hereafter.

Let us now proceed to ask our selves whether we are Guilty or not; when we find our selves Guilty, let us set it down upon a Paper, and say.

Lord have Mercy on me, and forgive me this sin.

To those we have not consented, let us humbly praise God, and say.

Glory be to thee, O Lord, for preserving me from this Sin. O continue thy Goodness, and give me Grace to resist it to my lives end.

After we have ranslak'd our *Breast*, and laid before us the dismal scene of our *Folly*, we shall certainly be moved at our *Transgressions*, and our *Repentance* will be usher'd in with *Sighs* and *Groans*, to testifie our Abhorrence, or *Tears* to show our Trouble. It is possible with both together, and when God sees us thus *Relenting* and *Trembling*, *Weeping* and *Blushing* for our *Offences*; he may be moved through the intercession of our Saviour, to hear our humble *Petitions*, for such a *Sacrifice* he is pleased with, and a Heart thus broken *God will not despise*. Therefore let us now humble ourselves and with all possible *Penitence*, confess our selves to God in the following form.

Righteousness, O Lord, belongs unto thee, but unto me confusion of Fate, the *Vainest*, the *Vilest*, the sinfulllest of all the Children of Men.

Lord,

Lord, I am vile in my own Eyes, and desire to be more vile, because my sins have made me vile in thine.

I am not Worthy of the *Air* I breath, of the *Earth* I tread upon, or the *Sun* that shines upon me; much less worthy to lift up Hands or Eyes to Heaven; for thou hast said that no unclean thing shall come within thy sight, how then shall I appear who am so miserably defil'd?

If the Man, according to thine own Heart, cou'd say that he was a Worm, and no Man, *Lord what am I?*

If *Abraham*, who had the Honour to be called thy Friend, cou'd say that he was but Dust and Ashes, *O God, what am I?*

O my God, thou maidst me of nothing; and thou seest how I have spoiled this Work of thine: I have made my self worse than nothing, for I am still in my Sins, and know not what to do, but this I will do.

I will confess my *Wickedness*, and be sorry for my *Sins*. I will pour out my *Prayers* in the bitterness of my *Spirit*; and therefore now Lord call my Sins to my *Remembrance*; and when thou hast so done, blot them out of thy *Remembrance*, and Pardon me. O 4 O

A Confession of Sin.

O Thou great Judge of Heaven and Earth, before whose glorious Majesty, even the good Angels who never sinned, fall prostrate and tremble; with what debasement and dread ought I to appear before thy awful Presence, who am but Dust and Ashes, and which is infinitely worse *a miserable Sinner*.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God Almighty, thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, with the least approbation, the way of the wicked and the sacrifice of the wicked is an *Abomination unto thee*: Wo is me then, *O Lord*, Wo is me, for I have inclined unto *Wickedness*, but for the sake of thy well-beloved *Son*, cast not out my prayer, nor turn thy mercy from me.

Miserable wretch that I am, I have gone astray from the very *Womb*, I was shapen in *Wickedness*, and in *Sin* did my Mother *Conceive me*. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean, What is Man then, *O God*, that he should be *Clean*, or he that is born of a Woman, that he should be *Righteous*? Thou, Lord, puttest no trust in thy Saints, The Heavens are nor clean in thy sight, and the very Angels thou chargest with folly. How

How much more abominable than am I, who daily drink iniquity like Water. Lord Pity, cleanse, forgive and save me, for thy mercies sake. I know, *O God*, that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing, for when I would do *Good*, *Evil* is present with me, and I see a Law in my Members warring against the Law of my Mind, bringing me into Captivity to the Law of Sin: *Lord have mercy on me*, and deliver me from this body of Death, from this tyranny of Sin.

Alas, my whole Nature is corrupt, infinitely prone to all *Evil*, and averse to all that is *Good*; my Understanding is full of Ignorance and error, my will perverse, my Memory tenacious of all things that may pollute me, but forgetful of my Duty; my Passions are inordinate, my Senses the inlets to all impurity; I have abused all my faculties, and am unclean, unclean.

Lord pity, cleanse, forgive, and save me, for thy mercies sake.

O Lord God, how have I through my whole life violated the solemn Vow I made to thee at Baptism, by eagerly pursuing the Vanities of this Wicked World; by early yielding to the Temptation

tation of the *Devil*, by greedily indulging my own carnal Desires and Lust, by a fruitless and dead faith, and by a disobedience to thy holy Will and Commandments.

Father, I have Sin'd against *Heaven*, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy *Son*; I have Sin'd, O *Lord God*, I have Sin'd against Thee. By, &c.

[*Here make your confession of Sins against God, and then add,*

O *Jesu*, Lamb of *God*, Son of the *Father*, let thy Blood cleanse me from these sins: O pity, forgive, and save me for thy mercies sake.

I have sin'd, O *Lord God*, I have sin'd against thee, and my own self. By, &c.

[*Here confess your sins against your Self, and then add,*

O *Jesu*, Lamb of *God*, &c.

I have sin'd, O *Lord God*, I have sin'd against thee, and my Neighbor. By, &c.

[*Here confess your sins against your Neighbor, and then add,*

O *Jesu*, Lamb of *God*, &c.

O *Lord God*, my wickedness is exceeding great, and my iniquities are infinite

finite; they are more in number than the hairs of my head, and my heart would fail me, but that I know thy mercies are greater than my sins. Have mercy upon me therefore, O God, according to the multitude of thy mercies do away my Offences.

Who, alas, can tell how oft he Offends? Oh, cleanse thou me from my secret faults; from all my sins of *Ignorance*, or *Infirmity*, or *Omission*, or which I have not observed, or which I have forgot, Lord, lay none of them to my charge: Father, forgive me, Lord Jesus have mercy upon me. O remember not the sins and offences of my Youth, but receive me, O heavenly Father, into the Arms of thy Fatherly compassion, and forgive me all my Transgressions for the merits of Jesus, thy Son, and my Saviour, *Amen*.

O Lord God of Mercy and Pardon, give me a just remembrance and sad apprehension of my sins; reach me to bewail them with as great indignation and bitterness, as I have committed them with complacency and delight: Let my Prayer and Confession come into thy presence, and obtain mercy and pardon for me. Let not thy Justice and
Severity

Severity so remember my sins as to forget thy own mercy, and though I deserve to be condemned, yet thou canst not lose that glorious attribute whence flows comfort to us, and hopes of being saved. Spare me therefore, O merciful God ; for to give pardon to a sinner that confesses his faults, and begs remission, is not impossible to thy Power, nor disproportionate to thy Justice, nor unusual to thy mercy. Blessed Jesu, acknowledge in me whatsoever is thine ; cleanse me from whatsoever is amiss : Have pitty on me, now in the time of mercy, and condemn me not when thou comest to judgment ; for what profit is there in my Blood. Thou delightest not in the death of a Sinner, but in his Conversion is joy in Heaven ; and when thou hast delivered me from my sins, and saved my Soul, I shall praise and magnifie thy Name to all Eternity, *O Jesu, God be merciful to me a miserable Sinner.*

O Lord, who art the God that hearest prayers, and alone has power finally to forgive sin, I beseech thee mercifully hear, and graciously answer these my Petitions for pardon. I am a sinner, and deserve punishment, but, O Lord,

Lord, remove my guilt, and spare me, who do now confess with shame and sorrow, my sins unto thee, that I whose Conscience by sin is accused so justly now before thee, by thy merciful pardon may be absolved from my Guilt, for the sake and through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord.

By thine Agony and bloody Sweat, by thy Cross and Passion, by thy precious Death and Burial, Good Lord deliver.

O Lamb of God that takest away the Sins of the World, *Have mercy upon*

*O Christ hear me,
Lord have mercy upon me,
Christ have, &c.
Lord, have mercy, &c.*

Our Father which art, &c.

A Prayer.

* **O** most gracious God, who out of
* thy boundless Compassion to
* thy Creatures, art never wanting in
* any means that may draw them to
* thy self. I the unworthiest of thy
* Servants, desire to give Glory to thee
* in a hearty acknowledgement, that
* thou hast afforded me all the methods
* that might either force or allure me
* to Obedience; but I have resisted
* that goodness of thine which should
* have lead me to Repentance: Thy
* compassion has been affronted by my
* continuance in sin, and thy forbear-
* ance only serv'd to harden me in Ini-
* quity. I have lived to provoke thy
* Mercies, by endeavouring to out-vye
* them with my Sins; what can I ex-
* pect but to find a Judgment worthy
* of God, such an irreversibile ruine as
* might render me an astonishing in-
* stance of thy severity to the whole
* Earth. Thou hast attested thy self
* to be indeed a Father of Mercies, and
* yet

yet I who enjoy the benefit of them,
 neither consider them as Blessings,
 nor thee as a God; but Atheistically
 despise that providence by which I sub-
 sist. (Thou givest me a time for Re-
 pentance, but I'm unwilling to throw
 off this Bondage of Sin, and think
 it a hardship to submit to that Yoke
 which is easie and delightful, and if
 I cou'd stifle the Terrors of my Con-
 science, wou'd gladly proclaim Licence
 to my Lusts. These are the base re-
 turns I have made; thus have I re-
 quited the Lord, and incur'd his Dis-
 pleasure, yet I am fearless of his
 Wrath, and can't repent me of my
 ways, nor consider the Evil I have
 done. Surely my Heart is hardened;
 and I am nigh unto Cursing; O
 Lord, what can I plead to avert the
 sentence, who am as far from Peni-
 tence as Innocence? How can I pray
 against that Vengeance which I make
 it my business to pull down? if thou;
 O Lord, shou'dst spare me, what wou'd
 it avail if it serve but to set me at a
 greater Hostillity with thee? O mer-
 ciful Saviour, who gavest thy self a
 ransom for Sinners, look again with
 compassionate Eyes on me, who
 needs

needs now a second Redemption, even a rescue from my self; Lord, thou seest the miserable state to which I am reduced, Where is thy Pity, and the sounding of thy Bowels towards the Afflicted? Oh! bow thy Heaven and come down, hear the Prayer of a distressed Sinner, deliver me from that misery I have involved my self, put thy Laws a new into my Heart, and write them in my Mind. O blessed Mediator, who prayedst for thy Crucifiers, interceed also for me, who have under the name of a Disciple crucified thee afresh; and tho' I have nothing to say for my self, cannot pretend that I knew not what I did; yet let thy Stripes and Wounds, thy Cross and Passion, plead for me. Oh! let thy Blessed Spirit breath again upon me, that even these dry Bones may live in thy sight. Let him so effectually convince and reprove, illuminate and excite me, that I may cleanse my self from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, walk worthy of the holy Vocation whereto I am called, and evidence my relation to the Prince of Peace. Oh, that my ways were thus direct, but
alas,

' alas, how little Disposition have I to-
 ' wards it: This change, must be on-
 ' ly the work of that mighty Power,
 ' which is able to subdue all things to
 ' it self; and yet, O Lord, with what
 ' face can I beg of thee to force me to
 ' that happiness which I still resolve to
 ' resist. What can I say to thee, O thou
 ' preserver, thou redeemer of men, who
 ' have put my self beyond all the ordi-
 ' nary means of thy grace: I can only
 ' lay my self at thy Feet, display my
 ' misery, and leave thee to consider
 ' thine own compassion. Oh, let that
 ' move thee to do for me, whatever my
 ' wretched state is in need off. O Lord,
 ' Hear, O Lord, forgive, consider,
 ' and do it, for thy name sake: Thou
 ' art Jesus, a Saviour, save thy servant
 ' from his sin, and let me not slide back
 ' by a perpetual backsliding. Oh, a-
 ' bandon not thy poor creature, Lord,
 ' carest thou not that I perish. Turn
 ' thee again, O Lord, sanctifie and
 ' cleanse me for I am exceeding sinfull,
 ' create a new Spirit within me, melt
 ' my obdurate heart into contrition,
 ' and if it cannot be done without the
 ' rigour of thy Laws, Lord do that, or

D

any

34 **Advice to those who never**

any thing with me, so that I may be-
 come a Vessel of honour meet for thy
 Service. But, O Lord, if thy gentler
 method may have any effect, be pleas-
 ed to continue thy *Long-suffering*,
 and though I have no pretence to
 mercy, yet do thou assert thine own
 work; be merciful because thou hast
 been so, dispence to me whatever
 thou see'st most apt to reduce me, and
 that thy outward applications may be
 no longer in vain, enforce and enli-
 ven them with thy free Spirit, subdue
 my obstinate perversness, and give me
 at last such Grace as I may not turn
 into wantonness. Oh, thou, to whom
 all things are possible, who hast been
 so merciful to me, work again greater
 miracles in me; and of a prophan un-
 grateful wretch, make me a penitent
 and obedient servant, that I may study
 as much to please as I have to provoke
 thee, & by a continuance in well doing,
 may obtain the Crown which thou hast
 laid up for those that serve thee, and
 possess eternal joys in the Kingdom
 of thy Father, which thou, O blessed
 Jesus, hast purchased with thy blood,
 and sealed by thy Spirit; To which
 blessed

Receiv'd the Sacrament. 35

‘ blessed Trinity be ascribed all praise,
‘ honour, Glory, now, and to eternity,
‘ Amen.

Acts of Shame.

O Lord God, I am Ashamed, and
Blush to lift up my Face to thee, for
my iniquities are increased over my
Head, and my Trespases grown up
unto Heaven.

O my Soul; what Fruit have I reapt
from all the pleasures of Sin, but *Vani-
ty and Vexation of Spirit*. Lord, I am
ashamed of my own Folly, Madness,
and Disingenuity; when I call to mind
how greedily I have sucked in my own
Pollution; how treacherously I have
betrayed my own Soul to *Temptations*;
and combined with the *Devils* to ha-
sten and increase my own *Damnation*;
how obstinately I have fled from thee,
when thy Mercy persued me with pro-
mises of *Pardon*; how unworthily I
have abused thy Goodness, and For-
bearance, and Long-sufferings which
should have led me to *Repentance*.

Acts of Contrition.

Son of David, Blessed Redeemer,
Lamb of God, that takest away the sins
of the World, have Mercy upon me;

O *Jesu*, be a *Jesus* unto me! Thou that sparedst thy *Servant Peter* that denied thee thrice; thou that didst cast seven Devils out of *Mary Magdalen*, and forgavest the Woman taken in Adultery, and didst bear the convert *Thief* from the Cross to the joys of *Paradise*, have Mercy upon me also. Though my

my repen
tance far
short of
theirs

Offences are greater than these, yet not their Sins, nor mine, nor the Sins of the whole World, can equal thy Glorious Mercy which is Infinite and Eternal as thy Self. I acknowledge, O Lord, that I am *Vile*, but yet redeemed with thy precious *Blood*; thou, O Lord, lovest to shew Mercy, behold then a fit Object for thy pity. My sins are so great and many, that to forgive me, will be a glorious act of mercy: Dispise me not, O Lord, for I am thy *Creature*, dispise me not, for thou didst die for me; cast me not away in thine *Anger*, for thou camest to seek and save me; Say unto my *Soul*, I am thy *Salvation*, let thy *Holy Spirit* lead me from the Error of my ways, into the paths of Righteousness, to great degrees of *Repentance*, and thro' all the parts of a *Holy Life*, to a Godly and *Holy Death*. Grant this, O
Blessed

Blessed Jesu for thy *Mercies*, and for thy pittie sake, *Amen*.

Most merciful and indulgent Jesus, hear the complaint of a sad and miserable *Sinner*. I have searched into the secret recesses of my Soul, there I find nothing but *Horror* and a barren *Wilderness*, a neglected *Conscience* overgrown with *Sins*, and cares beset with fears and fore *Amazement*. I tremble when I remember that sad Truth, *If the Righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the Wicked and Ungodly appear?* I know, O Lord, that all my secret impurities shall be laid open at thy *dreadfull Judgment*. O just and dear God! how shall I appear, who shall plead for me, who am loaden with *Impurities*, *Vanity*, *Ingratitude*, *Malice* and the *Terrors* of an affrightning *Conscience*? Wilt not thou answer for me, O Jesus, thou art my *Judge* and my *Advocate*, thou art to pass Sentence upon me for those *Sins* for which thou diest. O reserve not my *Sins* to be punished in the life to come, for then I die *Eternally*, but bring me in this World to a severe *Repentance*. Behold, I am in thy hand, grant I may so *Weep* and be contrite for my *Sins*, that in the hour of my *Death*,

I may find *Mercy*, and in the day of *Judgment* be freed from the Terrors of thy *Wrath*, and the Sentence of the *Wicked*. Thou hast spared me all this while, and not taken me off in the midst of my Sins, which is an unspeakable *Mercy*, for if thou had dealt with me according to my *Deserts*, I had been now at this instant sealed up to an Eternity of *Torments* hopelessly miserably, fearing the Revelation of thy day with an insupportable Amazement. But now under the sweet influences of thy mercy, I am praying to thee, confessing my sins with *Sorrow* for my ingratitude, but with a full hope in thy *Mercy*. O my dear God, let thy *Grace* speedily work that in me, for which thou so long hast spared me, even a true *Faith* and *Holy Life*; establish in me a great contrition for my *Sins*, lead me on to an humble *Confession*, and let thy *Grace* make me bring forth Fruits meet for *Repentance*. O Blessed Jesu, who liveth and reigns, ever one God, world without end, Amen.

Acts of Abhorrence.

I hate all evil ways, O Lord, But thy Law will I Love: O God, with shame I confess that other Lords besides thee

thee have hitherto had Dominion over me. Miserable Wretch that I am, that I should begin so early to offend my Creator, and sin so much in so short a *Span of time*. Lord, I fear I never yet through-*So Long to Sin*ly considered how evil and bitter a thing it is to depart from thee; O make me every day more and more sensible of the *Error of my ways*, and of my own infinit *Vileness*. Miserable Wretch that I am, that ever I should commit those sins which expose me to all the vials of thy *Wrath*, to all the curses of thy *Law*, to all thy judgments *Temporal* or *Spiritual* in this life, and to all the *Horrors* and *Despair* and *Torments* of the *Damned* in the life to come.

Miserable wretch that I am, that ever I should transgress that *Law* of thine; O God which is so Just, Holy and Good, perfect and so condescending to my Infirmities, and in keeping of which there are so great, so unconceivable rewards.

Contrition
O Blessed Saviour, how can I ever sufficiently lament the guilt of my Sins which was so great, that nothing but thy own inestimable *Blood* could expiate.

40 Advice to those who never

O *Blessed Spirit*, instil true penitential sorrow into my *Soul*; make my *Head Waters*, and my *Eyes Fountains of Tears*, or do thou supply the want of them with *Sighs* and *Groans* unutterable. But alas, I know all the *Tears* I can possibly shed, can never wash away the least of my *Sins*, 'tis thy *Blood* only, Lord, that can do it.

O Heavenly Father, in the defect of my own *Tears* I offer thee, the *Blood* of thy own well beloved Son, *for his sake have mercy upon me* *Resolutions*

I have been in the snare of the Devil, and been led Captive by him, and sin hath reigned in my *Mortal Body*, and I have obeyed it in the lust thereof, but from henceforth I resolve to serve none but thee, and from this very moment I utterly forsake all my sins and turn to thee. I do from my heart renew my *Baptismal Vow*; I do for ever renounce the *Devil and all his Works*, and the *Vanities of this World* which may pervert me from thy *Service*, and *all the sinfull Lust of the Flesh*. O my God, I do steadfastly believe all the *Articles of the Christian Faith*, I will keep thy *Holy Will and Commandments*, and walk in the same all the days of my

Receiv'd the Sacrament.

41

my life. All this I am bound to do and believe, and by thy help so I will ; and I heartily thank thee, O Father, who hast called me to this state of *Salvation*, through Jesus Christ my *Saviour*, and I humbly pray thee for his sake to give me *Grace* to continue in the same to my lives end.

O Lord God I have Sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy *Righteous Judgments* ; but alas, I'm not able of my self to do nothing that is Good, not so much as to think one good thought, and I no sooner shall rise from my *Knees*, but I fear I shall be tempted to those very sins I have now so solemnly renounced, and those *Temptations* will certainly overcome me, unless thou, Lord, do'st reasonably interpose thy *Grace* to with-hold me, but I can do all things through the strengthening me ; do thou then, O Blessed Saviour, perfect thy strength in my weakness, *for in thee only is my trust*. O my God, thou hast promised to give thy Holy Spirit to those that ask it. Behold, Lord, I do Humbly, I do Earnestly ask thy *Holy Spirit* now of thee. O fullfil thy gracious Promises to me !

me! O vouchsafe me that *Holy Spirit* I pray for, to purifie my *corrupt Nature*, to strengthen my *Weakness*, to comfort me in *Troubles*, to support me in *Discouragements*, to succor me in *Temptations*, and to assist me in all the part of my *Duty*. Thou, O searcher of hearts, knowest the sins I'm most inclined to; [*here name them*] herein will lie my greatest danger of Back-sliding; but, O my God, I beg a double portion of thy Spirit, and invisible aid against them; hold thou up my goings in thy paths, *that my Foot-steps slip not*. O work in me that victorious Faith by which I may overcome the World, the Devil, and my own corrupt Nature.

My help standeth in thee, O great Creator of Heaven and Earth, and I commit my *Soul* to thy keeping. (O thou that art Faithful as well as Almighty, keep that safe which is committed to thy Trust,) watch over me that I may not be beguiled by the deceitfulness of Sin, or betrayed by my own treacherous heart, or surprised by my *Ghostly Enemies*, and give me grace to Watch and Pray incessantly my self, *least I enter into Temptation*.

O Heavenly Father, for thine own infinit Mercy sake, for thy Truth and Promise sake, for all the Merits and Sufferings of the Son of thy Love in whom thou art always well pleased; pardon all my Sins and Failings, and receive me into thy favour for the sake of him who has taught me to call the Father, and when I pray to say,

Our Father which art, &c.

The following Form to be added when we have some assurances, that our Hearts are steadfast towards God.

O the God of my life, and the unexhausted Fountain of mercy, which can never be drawn dry. I have now by the assistance of thy *Holy Spirit*, gone through, though with weak and trembling steps, the whole exercise of *Repentance*; for I have confessed my Sins, and thou hast promised, upon my Confession of them, not to impute them to me; I have gone one step farther, I have repented of my Sins, and thou hast promised upon my *Repentance*,
thou

44 **Advice to those who never**

thou wilt remember them no more; and because thy Holy Word hath taught me, that a new life is the only Repentance, I have this day in thy sight, and in the presence of all the Angels, that attend thee in the conversion of a sinner, made my firm resolution never to fall again into the Sins I have repented of, and now

O God the Father of Heaven, who canst not be thought so cruel as to make me only to destroy me,

[*Have mercy upon me.*

O God the Son, who knowing thy Father's Will, didst make it thy business to come into the World to save me,

[*Have Mercy, &c.*

O God the Holy Ghost, who to the same end didst sanctifie me in my Baptism, and hast so often since breathed Holy thoughts into my Soul,

[*Have mercy, &c.*

O Holy Blessed and Glorious Trintiy, whom in three persons I adore as my one and only true God.

[*Have mercy on me.*

Hear me, O Lord.

Help me, O Lord.

Save me, or else I perish.

Lord,

Lord, carest thou not that I perish.

Thou that wouldest have all men to be saved.

Thou who wouldest have none to perish.

And wilt thou now shew thine anger against a *Warm*, against a *Vapour* that vanishes before thee? O remember how short my time is, and deliver not my *Soul* into the power of *Hell*, for what profit is there in my *Blood*; no, let me live in thy sight, let me live, O my God, that my *Soul* may praise thee: O remember for whose sake it was that thou camest from the Bosom of thy Father: Remember for whom it was that thou enduredst the agony of the Cross, and shed thy precious Blood. Was it not for the Sins of the whole World, and hast thou particularly excepted me? Can I imagine thou diest for *Sinners* of a lower kind, and left such as I without Remedy: O how easie is it to thee to forgive, for 'tis thy Nature; how proper is it for thee to save, for it is thy Name; how suitable is it to thy only end of coming into the World, for it was thy business; and when I consider that I am chief of *Sinners*, may I not urge the Father
and

and say, shall the very chief of thy business be left undone.

[*Mercy, Mercy, Good Lord.*

I ask not of thee any longer the things of this World, but thy pardoning *Mercy*. O that I could hear thee say, as thou didst to him in the Gospel, *My Son be of good chear, thy sins are forgiven thee.*

O that I could never sin against thee more, never purposely, deliberately, willfully sin against thee more, and for those sins of daily Incurſion, those over familiar corruptions of my Nature which thou hast not yet given me strength enough to conquer, Lord, either subdue them by degrees, or lay them not to my Charge; but whereinsoever my Conscience most accuseth me, therein, O my God, be thou most merciful unto me.

[*Save me, O Lord, as a brand snatch out of the Fire.*

Receive me, O my Jesus, as a sheep that has wandred, but now is return'd to the Great *Shepherd* and Bishop of my Soul.

Let this day, O my God, be noted in thy Book, do not thou forget my *Prayers*, nor suffer me to forget my *Resolutions*;

tions; though I am weak, though I am unworthy, though I am unprofitable, yet I am thy Servant, and here upon my bended Knees, I humbly beg of thee that I may live and die so.

Lord hear my Prayers, and let my cry come unto thee. Lord pardon my Prayers, and let not my coldness, and wanderings, and infinite unworthiness turn them into Sin. *Lord hear my Prayer, and let my cry come unto thee.*

O Lord Jesu Christ, Son of the Eternal God, interpose thy holy Death, thy Cross and Passion between thy Judgment and my Soul now, and in the hour of my death, granting unto me Grace and Mercy; to all faithfull people, pardon and peace; to the Church, unity and amity; to all Sinners, especially those I have led into Sin, Repentance and Amendment; to us all, life and Glory everlasting, who livest and reignest ever one God World without end. *Amen.*

O Lord, bless me, and keep me, O Lord, Make thy face to shine upon me, O Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, and give me peace for ever. *Amen.*

Having

Having performed this Office with due sincerity, let us reflect upon what we have been doing; 'tis possible the result of our Thoughts may terminate in a mixture of fear and joy: But we ought not to let either passion prevail more than is justly necessary; don't let our fear depress, and cast us into such a Melancholy, as may suggest, God won't be reconciled, and if we have been dull in the performance of these things, that God has rejected us. The *Devil* knows how fatal this course is, to redeem us from his Power; he is very busie to prevent our repentance, and abuse our imaginations with allusions; perhaps our own disuse of prayer has rendred us incapable of a due attention; 'tis impossible to become immediately good from being very wicked; or that we should pray with the same steadfastness, as they who are accustomed to this duty: We are therefore to strive to the uttermost; where we fail to be sorry, ask God's Pardon and Grace to do better for the future, and in a little time we shall prevail to our satisfaction: On the other side, don't let our joy puff us up, and because we have shed a few Tears, said so
many

many Prayers, Fasted and given Alms, that we are now become perfect, and need no more Repentance; we have but set the first step to this great work of our Salvation, were we sure we had fully conquered sin, and shou'd not suffer our selves to be deceived any more: Yet this negative part of Christianity is not sufficient, 'tis not enough that we cease to do Evil, but learn to do Well; we are now to begin our course, and as we have many things to unlearn, so there are abundance to learn, *without which we shall never see the Face of God.* What they are the Scripture will inform us, 'tis from thence we are to learn our perfection, for he hath shewed thee, *O man what is Good*, to do Justice, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God; we are to attend the *House of Prayer*, frequent the *Sacrament*, and be holy in all manner of *Conversation*. If we want to be informed in any thing, let us have recourse to our Pastor, that he may satisfy our *Consciences*. I would advice that our Confession be made to some discreet Minister; for 'tis a great sign of our *Repentance*, when we are thus willing to take shame to our selves;

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besides 'twill be a greater restraint upon us. We shall be affraid to join in the next *Temptation*, when we know we must confess it; 'tis the depravedness of our Nature to be affraid, rather of Men than God. We are not scrupulous to do those things in private, which we cou'd not do before Men; 'tis seldom that Companions in Wickedness will suffer one another to be Witnesses of their shame, so easie is it to be affraid to confess what we don't blush to commit; but this I leave to every Man's Conscience, but let him have a care he don't deceive his own Soul. We shall be tortured to little purpose to put our selves upon mock *Repentances*, and when our Confessions come willfully short of our sins, we willfully exclude our selves from the Favour and Mercy of God; 'twill be a sad remembrance at the last day, to think 'twas in our power to be Happy, that we were not far from the *Kingdom of Heaven*, and yet must fall short of the *Glory of God*. To prevent which, let us deal Faithfully with our *Souls*, when we think we stand, be careful we don't fall, and having begun our course to continue to our lives end, that we may be saved. When

When we come abroad into the World, there is a necessity we set a watch over ourselves, we must expect to be attack'd, if we can bear the first assault, the rest will fall by degrees, and every *Temptation* be less powerful; when we are first tempted let us remember, that this is the very thing that has cost us so much trouble, which we vow'd to resist, which is our mortal Enemy, and which will set us at a greater variance with God. How can we do this thing, and sin against Heaven? Let us Remember this is the first Tryal, if we submit, how can we think to prevail another time? the next *Temptation* may have a better appearance. There may be a Thousand things to render it more taking, and so by degrees we shall be brought to our old state, and the last condition will be worse than the first. We must not allow our selves in the Commission of any one known sin, we must resist the beginning, we must not suffer our selves to think upon old Habits, but with abhorrence; for 'tis not only a sin, but will endanger us to fall back. If we take pleasure in their remembrance, the Devil wont fail to excite our delight, by adding some new

relish to make them more acceptable; if we would shun the danger, we must avoid the occasion, and then need not fear being led into *Temptation*. But there is a greater motive yet; we must remember we are but beginning, and to look back at the first step is such a piece of folly, that every body must be ashamed of. Sure none can be so unreasonable to desire it should be reckoned among their good Deeds, that they only thought of *Repentance*; if we are truly sensible of our sins, we shall be very desirous to get rid of them: We are taught there is no way, but by coming to Christ, *they that come unto him must do the Will of his Father*, to those he gives power to become the Sons of God, the Children of God are manifest; they that do wickedness are not of God. Let us endeavour therefore to add, to our *Repentance*, Obedience, that acceptable Sacrifice, and be forward in all the duties of Christianity; that so we may approve ourselves in well doing, for 'tis the will of the Lord that we add to our Faith, Virtue; and when we have tryed our selves, that we can resist *Temptation*, and are ready to Good Works; let us then prepare to meet the Lord at

his

his Holy Table, that we may receive Grace and Strength, *to walk in the same all the days of our lives.* This is the great duty of the *New Law*, and there needs no arguments to bring those to the Sacrifice, who are sensible of their necessities, or are desirous of growing better. Our Church has taken care to instruct every Christian how he may become a worthy Receiver, by telling him first what he ought to Believe and then what he ought to Practice. I shall content my self with the method of the Church in both these Cases, and recommend it to those who are desirous to be inform'd. Bread and Wine is what the Lord has commanded to be received, and the Church has told us, that they signifie the Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken by the Faithful, and the benefits are the strengthening and refreshing of our Souls. This is what we are positively to believe, and when we can give our intire assent, let us according to the Direction of the Church examine our selves, whether we repent truly of our former sins, *steadfastly purposing to lead a new Life, have a lively Faith in God's mercy through Jesus Christ, with a*

thankful Remembrance of his Death, and be in Charity with all Men. This is in short the Duty of every Communicant, and no Man who would come to the Lord's Supper worthily, can leave out any of these things; instead of a great many Arguments, I must press the observance of them. 'Tis the misfortune of a great many to think they have discharged their Duty, if they can use so much Self-denial as to refrain from their usual excess a week before the Sacrament; say the Morning and Evening Devotion, and bring themselves to confess they are sorry, for what upon a little Examination, they find a miss. This they think is *Repentance* enough, and because their Book finds no more work for them, set down well satisfied with their performance. They seem willing to compound the matter with God Almighty, confess themselves Bank-rupt, and desire to be set free for paying half Tribute. They have their set times for *Devotion*, are content to be Fools for three Weeks, and then set down to make up the Month the other week, and confess their Folly: Thus for one weeks *Penance* think God is obliged to be reconciled, and because they

they have the impudence to wipe their Mouth, conclude God will think they have done no ill; but we can't deceive God, where 'tis to be had, he will exact the uttermost Farthing; *let our Consciences be our Judges, and our Guides: Use Books only as helps to Devotion,* for 'tis impossible for a Book to be writ to suit every Man's occasion, there is something particular to every one of us, that another perhaps never thought of, and 'tis not likely such a one is capable to prescribe a Remedy before hand; wherefore when we are arrived so far in our way to *Happiness*, as the forsaking our old Habits, and placing better in their room, we may venture to draw nigh to that *Holy Ordinance*, of which whosoever is a worthy partaker shall live for ever. A good Life is the best preparitive to this Feast, 'tis not enough we shake hands with our Vices for a time, and return to our Folly when the Ceremony is over; if we are not qualified before we come, we are in danger to receive this *Sacrament Unworthily*, and the consequence of that is so terrible, that the thoughts of it must amaze us: No Man is qualified that does not sincerely *Repent*, it can't be

supposed that God has allotted just so much time to mortifie our selves, or that a week is sufficient to prepare us for *Heaven*. They who have lived in a course of sin, and never approached this *Holy Communion*, must not think the first fit of Sorrow sufficient to Denounce them true *Penitents*. It requires time, and pains to conquer their *Lusts*, the old Man must be cast off, and they must give a signal of their Loyalty before they be accepted Subjects of the *Most High*; in short, if upon Examination we find our Faith firm, our Purposes steadfast, and our Desires after Christ strong, we may come to the Altar of God, and if we appear there with Charity; our Prayers shall be convey'd from thence to the presence of God. 'Tis upon no other terms we can come with security, for there is no concord between Christ and *Belial*: They who frequent the *Sacrament*, and suffer themselves in the Commission of any known sin, are reconciling of contradictions, and will find their mistake to their confusion.

'Tis very certain, as long as we are upon Earth, we are in a state of Trial; no man must expect to be exempt from Temptation: But we should make it
our

our business to strive and resist the *World, Flesh* and the *Devil*. If by surprise, or other accident, we are betrayed into sin, we know our duty to be sorry, and arm our selves against it for the future: We may reasonably expect pardon upon this humiliation, if we dont join our good Will, and commit the evil with approbation. This we certainly do, if we suffer our selves to be often over come by the same Temptation; such a one ought to suspect the sincerity of his resolution, and not approach the holy Communion, till he is satisfied his heart is perfect in the Commandments of God: But after all, men must be left to themselves in this matter: 'Tis certain, no man can be a Hipocrite against his knowledge, and what pretences men have for Hipocrisy in other cases, they are reasons of a prodigious nature, which shall induce a man to play the cheat upon himself: For no man is forced to the Sacrament, and if he was, 'tis very sad it should be accounted criminal to Oblige them to be good: However men trifle in other cases, let them be serious in this; if they are really sincere, God will pardon a multitude of Faults; no
Man

58 **Advice to those who never**

Man that knows his own sincerity need be affraid to approach the table of the Lord.

When the Minister declares the time of the next Communion, and invites all such as shall religiously be disposed, let us lift up our Souls to God, and beg of him that we may become worthy Partakers of his *Body* and *Blood*: In order to it, let us remember, the nearer we draw to God in his *Holy Ordinances*, the greater must be our care in the Management of our selves; tho', (as I have already premised) a *Good Life* is the best preparative to a worthy Reception of the *Lord's Supper*, yet when we approach the Presence of the Lord, we ought to be more than ordinary circumspect. 'Twas *David's* resolution, *To wash his hands in Innocency*, before he approacht the Altar of God. God himself commanded *Joshua* to pull off his shooes when he was upon the holy Ground; and then surely 'tis our duty, to become such as the Lord may be ~~well~~ well pleased with: Let us as much as possible this week, have our conversation with God: Don't let it suffice that we have formerly call'd our selves to account, but go over all again, there

there may be something past over in our last *Examination*, or something new to add to our *Affliction*; however the sight of our late *Iniquity* will sufficiently affect us, and beholding our misery afresh, we shall be the more desirous of coming to Christ; for our Sins when we are sensible of them, will be a burden too heavy for us to bear: But to increase our *Desires*, *Humiliation* and *Love*, let us reflect on the Goodness of God, in sending Our Saviour Jesus to be a sacrifice for our Sins, that as the Terrors of the Lord first brought us to our selves, so now the *Wonders* of his Love may effectually perswade us to turn to the Lord our God, that he may have mercy upon us.

*A Meditation Preparatory to the
Communion.*

Lord, what is Man, that thou hast respect unto him, and the Son of Man that thou so regardest him? When we had forfeited thy *Favour*, by a cursed *Disobedience* to thy Command, and de-
served

served to feel the reward of our *Folly* to Eternal ages ; if thou hadst only spared us from thy *Wrath*, and delivered our *Soul* from the neithermost *Hell*, that Mercy had called for our greatest Devotion, and employed us to eternity in singing Praises ; but thy infinite Love would not debar us the priviledge of *Creation* ; since thou madest us for thy self, thou resolvedst to try all means to bring us to the enjoyment of that *Happiness*. When we were sunk into *Misery*, almost beyond recovery, what manner of Love didst thou extend to the drooping World which lay in *Darkness*, and in the shadow of *Death* ; thou emptiedst thy self, and communicatedst to us of thy fullness, by sending thy *Eternal Son* out of thy Bosom to make us thy Children, and exalt us to everlasting life.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of *Salvath, Heaven and Earth* are full of the Majesty of thy Glory, Glory be to thee O God. Glory be to thee for this incomprehensible Mystery : O thou God, who wast manifested in the flesh, *Glory be to thee* ; inspire the univerial World to a greatfull acknowledgment of

of thy Love surpassing knowledge:
That we may all acknowledge thee to
be the Lord, for on Earth there is none
like thee, and among the Gods there
is none can do as thou hast done; *When*
thou tookest upon thee to deliver Man,
thou didst not abhor the Virgins Womb,
but submitted to our flesh, that thou
mightest open the *Kingdom of Heaven*
to all believers.

O Thou Word of God, how didst
thou strip thy self of thy *Glory*,
and descend from the felicities of thy
Throne, to take upon thee the form of a
Servant? Thou wert born of poor *Pa-*
rents, and laid in a *Manger*; thou in-
duredst *Hunger* and *Thirst*; and hadst
no place to lay thine head, yet did it
not discourage thee from going about
to do good, But these were the least of
thy sufferings, thy Love to this World
urged thee on to greater difficulties, and
for which the whole host of Heaven
must praise and adore thee to Eternity.
After thou hadst declared thy inten-
tion of coming to save *Sinners*, and
notwithstanding the opposition of Men
and *Devils*, didst deliver the Doctrine
of Salvation to compleat thy Father's
Will,

Will, and fullfill the Scriptures concerning thee; thou proceedest to give thy self a Sacrifice, to atone for those Sins from which neither Men nor Angels were able to set us free. Thy Life indeed was an intire piece of sorrow, and thou always didst suffer by the contradiction of Sinners: Thy works of Charity were received as unkindnesses, and thy Miracles supposed to be the works of the *Devil*, tho' thou spakest as never Man spake, yet they rejected both thee, and thy doctrine: Thus didst thou endure those Affronts and Injuries; which were never offer'd to any but thy self, and with much pains, yet admirable patience, go on not only to confirm thy former goodness, but to add a mercy greater than them all, and seal it by thy precious Blood.

Here all our Thoughts ought to be Silence, Amazement, Reverence and Admiration, with Tears of Love and Contrition; that the Eternal Son of God to cloath us with his Grace should cloath himself with our humble Nature, and presently load himself with the Burthen of our sins, take upon him their punishment, and die upon the Cross for them too. That the cleansing of us should make him be defiled,

filed, with the spittings of Blasphemous Mouths; that for the washing our Souls, he should shed his precious Blood. This is a business more proper for our Love than Meditation, more to make us active in his Service, than Contemplative in our Thoughts, and to be expressed more by our wonder than our word.

BUT, O thou God of Mercy, thou didst not leave us comfortless, thou sawest how much reason we should have to Mourn, Fast and Pray, when the Bride-groom should be taken hence, and therefore didst send thy *Holy Spirit* to assist us till thy coming again; accomplish therefore the number of thine Elect, and hasten thy Kingdom, that we, with all that are departed in thy Faith, may have our perfect Consummation in Bliss. Jesus, my God, give me Grace to be ready when soever thou callest, that I may meet thee with thy Saints at thy second coming, and be fit to enter with thee into thy Glory.

O My Soul take yet a fuller view of the loving kindness of the Lord; consider the infinite compassion of thy *Redeemer*, how great a regard he had to thy Safety when he was in view of his dreadful Passion; for that very Night in which he was betrayed into the hands of sinful Men, he instituted the *Holy Sacrament*, left us his Body and Blood to be a continual remembrance of him.

O Infinite Charity, which contentedst not thy self with being our Redemption, unless thou also becomest our Nourishment. O infinit Charity; which knowing that our *Offences* would Nail thee to the *Cross*, wert yet providing a remedy for those *Offences*. Lord, is it thy custom to repay Benefits for Injuries? Come hither ye *Devout Souls*, bewail with me so great a *Sin*; come Love with me so great a *Love*; come with a *Spiritual Hunger*, and offer up your hearts to receive that *Divine Nourishment*, and prepare your *Souls* for this beloved Lord to Enter.

No

NO sooner had he finished this *Holy Mystery*, but he yielded to be encompassed with the Sorrows of *Death*; having first kindly cautioned his Disciples of the approaching Tragedy, the time of which he had often told them was at hand, the Shepherd was to be smitten, and the Flock scatter'd abroad: They had hitherto repos'd their confidence in his Protection, and had all their safety from him; but the time was coming when they too must drink of the Cup which was now preparing for him; and that they might be encouraged to follow his blessed steps he first set them the Example of his patience, that they might submit with the greater Resignation; this was his time of *Suffering* for them, and he only would have them see how willingly he would lay down his life for their Sakes; they might surely resist unto Blood when he had trod the dreadful path before them, but we find his Sufferings came on too fast, and were too severe for them to behold. That stout Champion who had formerly confessed him to be Christ, and was for dying with him, cou'd follow him now

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but a far off: His *Agony* in the *Garden* was but the beginning of *Sorrows*; he there saw his *Passion* but at a distance, though that cast him upon his *Knees*, and betrayed the *Horrors* his *Soul* laboured under. Our sins were pressing upon him, and he who knew no sin began to feel the weight of ours, and the *Wrath of God* which was due to us for ever.

Where, O my *Soul*, behold him prostrate on the *Ground*, his *Nature* racked with an insupportable *Amazement*, and the stream of his *Blood* turned a contrary course, forcing it self through the pores of his *Body*, and his *Humanity* sunk by an extremity of *Sorrow* to the *Gates of Death*.

He had no sooner overcome this terrible *Conflict*, but behold the fatal *Messengers* of his *Afflictions* ready to apprehend him; his own *familliar Friend*, who had eat of his *Bread*, conducting them to the place where he was. This was their hour, and he was to suffer even for the ingratitude of his *Murderers*; he finds himself now forsaken, as well as betrayed by his *Friends*, and they who could not watch for his safety, could now fly for their
own

own. Thus desolate and helpless was the innocent *Lamb of God*, expos'd to the extravagance of a Blood Thirsty People, who came upon him with *Sword* and *Staves*, but there was little need of *Guards* to secure one, who was so willing to obey their *Summons*; tho' their strength and number cou'd not add Resolution to their *Guilt*; for his own Confession, *that I am He*, aw'd them into a Reverence, made them go Backward, and fall to the Ground. But now he lays aside his Majesty, and submits to their Rage, who with Infamy and Derision drag'd him to the Judgment Seat. Where, though their Malice was great enough to say any thing, cou'd not make their accusations agree; they laid to his Charge things that he never *said nor did*, yet that with the Voices of the chief *Priests* must prevail; and though the judge declared him Guiltless; yet the People had among them a Law, by which he ought to die. Even to this, he opened not his *Mouth*; but submitted to all that their *Revenge*, *Impudence* and *Cruelty* cou'd invent. Since he had profess'd himself their King, they were resolv'd not to lead him to *Execution*, before they Cloath'd him with

68 **Advice to those who never**

Vestments of Derision, Crown him with a Diadem of *Affliction*, and put the Scepter of *Weakness* into his *Hand*; they Bow the Knee before him, Salute him King, and to fill up their *Ingratitude*, inhumanly defile his Face with *Spittle*. After the Horrid Pomp of this Solemnity was over, they divested him of this Dignity, and proceeded to treat him like a Slave, and that his Death might appear more dreadful; they usher it in with all its *Terrors*, with *Stripes* and *Scourges*, and all the *Torments* their malice could Inflict. Thus bruised and wounded with the weight of our Transgression, he ascends the last steps of his *Passion*, and without the least Reluctance, stretches out his Arms to be fix'd on the most painful instrument of Death, where, O my Soul, behold the Son of Man lifted up! O dearest God, who wast *Wounded*, *Despised*, *Crucified*, and *Crowned* with *Thorns*, and for my sins wert *Nailed* to the *Cross*, I beseech thee by the Merits of them all, O sweetest Jesus, to pardon my Offences.

His Death was now a hastning on, and their Diversion near to a Conclusion; they were resolved to make the best

best use of their time, and make their ingratitude last as long as his life; they rail on Him, treat him with all the marks of *Infamy*, and continue their *Revilings* to his dying *Minute*. Their *Madness*, *Folly*, and *Aggravations* reached Heaven, put the World into disorder, and turned the *Day* into *Night*, but could not move his *Soul*; he saw their *Madness*, felt the weight of their *Offences*, and only prayed for their *Forgiveness*; he pitied their *Misery*, and when they endeavor'd to pull the Vengeance of his *Blood* upon their Heads, he was shedding it as Sacrifice for their *Wickedness*. But when the Majesty of Heaven grew *Angry*, and exerted his *Fury*, and laid on him the iniquities of us all, he trembled at his *Wrath*, cou'd not bear the direction of the *Deity*, and groan'd away his *Soul*; when God with-drew his presence from his support; yet, neither the *Frowns* of his angry Father, nor the *Rage* of Men or Devils could make him sink, till all was fullfil'd, which the Scriptures spake concerning him; when that was finish'd he only tarried to recommend his Mother to the pious care of his beloved Disciple, bowed his Head, and gave up the Ghost.

O crucified Jesus, let thy Blood wash my Scu^l, I am not ashamed of thy Cross, but adore thee in thy Passion, and acknowledge thee to be God.

Let us now turn the Scene, and think how we have offended this God, and lived in a continual *Rebellion*, and then of what punishment ought we to be thought worthy, who have Slighted, Contemned, and abused such infinite Mercy; Who have returned the Love of God with the basest ingratitude, and had no other reason for our Wickedness, but that God was Good? What an inconceivable Mercy is it that we are not this minute in those unquenchable Flames, where the exquisiteness of the Torment should oblige us instead of crying for Mercy to breath out horrid Blasphemies? And as we slighted his Government here, Curse and Dam his severity there, still sinking our selves deeper in the intollerable Misery, where will be no Mittigation of the *Torment*, nor end to our sad *Affliction*. Let us constrain all the forces of our *Soul* to praise God that we are alive, entreating his Pardon: Let us beg Pardon even for taking that liberty to praise him, and withal, that he would still help us
to

to praise him more. O let us reflect on every thing that may move us to confess our *Wickedness*, and be sorry for our sins.

The thoughts of these things may well enough put us in a heat, and when our Passions are thoroughly urged, vent themselves in Sighs, and earnest desires of *Reconciliation*, that both of them may meet with success; let us add alms to our *Fasting* and *Prayer*, for when our Petitions are thus assisted, the mercy of God will not deny us a suitable return; therefore in the entrance to our Devotion, let us set apart something for the Poor, and humbly offer it up in the following form.

O God, Blessed be thy Name, all things come of thee, and of thine own do I now give thee; O let this Alms be as an Odour of a sweet smell; and acceptable in thy sight.

Preparatory Prayers before the Communion.

ALmighty Eternal God, thou art the comforter of all that call upon thee, thou hast concluded all under sin, that thou mightest have Mercy upon all. Look upon me, O God, and have pity on me, lying in my *Blood* and *Misery* in my *Shame* and in my *Sins*, in the fear and guilt of thy *Wrath*, in the shadow of thy *Death*, and in the Gates of *Hell*. I confess to thee, O God, what thou knowest already, but I confess it to glorifie thy *Mercy*, who hast spared me so long; I am guilty of the vilest and basest *Follies*, which usually dishonour *Fools*, and the worst of Men; I have been Proud and Covetous, Envious and Lustful, Angry, Indevout and Irreligious, restless in my Passions, Sensual, hating wise Counsels, and soon weary of the Offices of a *Holy Religion*. I cannot give an account of my Time, and I cannot reckon the Sins of my Tongue; my Crimes are In-

Intolerable, my Imperfections Shameful, and my Omissions Innumerable ; What shall I do, O thou preserver of Men ? I'm so Vile I cannot express it, so Sinful that I'm odious to my self, and I'm much more Abominable in thy sight. I have sinned against thee without Necessity, sometimes without Temptation, only because I would Sin. I have been so Ungreatful, Foolish and Unreasonable, that I have put out my own Eyes, that I might with confidence and without fear, sin against so good a God, so mighty a Redeemer ; my sin is grown shameful, and aggravated even to Amazement. O God, I'm amazed and confounded in thy presence.

BUT yet, O God, thou art the healer of our Breaches, and the luter up of our Head. I must not despair, I'm sure thy gooness is infinite, thou doest not delight in the Death of a Sinner, my sins, though very great, are infinitely less than thy Mercies ; I'm not worthy to look up to Heaven, but be thou pleased to look down into the Dust ; let me not perish in my Folly, or be consumed in thy Displeasure ; give me time to Repent, give me the power

power of thy Spirit, that as by thy Gift and Mercy I intend to amend what is amiss, so I may indeed have Grace and Power faithfully to fulfil the same. Inspire me with the Spirit of Repentance and Mortification, that I may always fight against my sins, till I be more than Conqueror. Support me with a Holy Hope, confirm me with an excellent Operative, and unreprouable Faith, enkindle a bright and burning Charity in my Soul, and grant by the power of thy Spirit, I may overcome all Carnal and Spiritual Wickedness, be wholly delivered from sin, preserved from thy Wrath, and at last pass on to the Glories of thy Kingdom, through Jesus Christ my Saviour.

A Meditation of St. Austin.

BEfore thy Eyes, O Gracious Lord, we bring our *Crimes*; before thee we expose the *Wounds* of our *bleeding Souls*: That which we suffer, is but little; that which we deserve, is *intolerable*. We fear the *Punishment* of our
Sins,

Sins, but cease not pertinaciously to proceed in *sinning*. Our *Weakness* is sometimes smitten with thy *Rod*; but our *Iniquity* is not changed. When thou smitest us, then we confess our *Sins*; but when thy *Visitation* is past, then we forget that we have wept. When thou stretchest forth thine *Hand*, then we promise to do our *Duty*; but when thou takest it away, we perform no *Promises*. If thou strikest, we cry to thee to spare us; but when thou sparest, we provoke thee again to *Anger*. Thus, O God, the *Guilty* confess before thee: Unless thou givest us *Pardon*, it is but just we perish. But, O Almighty God, our Father, grant to us what we ask, even though we deserve it not. Pardon us, O Gracious Father; and take away all our *Sin*: Destroy the *Work of the Devil*, let the *Enemy* have no part in us: Acknowledge the *Work of thine own Hand*, the *Price of thine own Blood*, and the *Purchase of thine own Inheritance*; and bring us to the *Place* which thou hast design'd for us by the *Blood of the Everlasting Covenant*, by the *Pains of thy Cross*, and the *Glories of thy Resurrection*, O Holy and Blessed Jesus, our Redeemer.

Most

Most merciful God and Father! I
 thine *unworthy Servant*, render
 my *humblest Thanks* to thy *Divine Maje-*
sty, that it has pleas'd thee, notwith-
 standing my *Unworthiness*, to give me a
Heart to approach thy *Blessed Sacrament*.
 Give me thy *Grace*, that I may be a cu-
 rious *Spender* of my *Time* this *Week*, so
 as I may best resist or prevent all *Temp-*
tation. Let thy *Grace* so perpetually
 assist and encourage my *Endeavours*,
 conduct my *Will*, and fortifie my *Inten-*
tions, that I may persevere in that *holy*
Condition which thou hast put me in by
 the *Grace* of the *Covenant*, and the *Mer-*
cies of the *Holy Jesus*. Oh, let me ne-
 ver fall into those *Sins*, and retire to that
 vain *Conversation*, from which the *Eter-*
nal and *Merciful Saviour* of the *World*
 hath redeemed me. Let thy *Preventing*
Grace dash all *Temptations* in their Ap-
 proach, that my *Hopes* be never dis-
 compos'd, my *Faith* weaken'd, my *Con-*
fidence made remiss, nor my *Portion* be
 lessen'd in the *Covenant*. Give me *Grace* to
 put on the *Wedding-Garment*: And since
 thou hast commanded me to *examine*
myself, let me seriously consider and re-
 view my *Life* and *Actions*; and how I

am

am prepar'd for so weighty an Action. I desire to do this, O Lord, help my *weak Desires*. Give me *Power* to live more exactly than I have done. I confess, O Lord, I am by *Nature a Child of Wrath*; give me therefore a *True and Lively Faith*, that I may be spiritually join'd to thee by the *Visible Signs of Bread and Wine*: And to cleanse my *Soul*, that thou mayest take up thy *Habitation* within me. I know, O Lord, I am unworthy of this *Blessing*; yet for thy Name sake, bestow it upon me: And when I present my self before thee, at thy *Table*, restrain my *Wandering and Idle Thoughts*; let them be seriously fix'd on the *Death* of my *Saviour*: And 'as I receive this *Bread and Wine* for Bodily Sustenance, so cause me to feed on the *Body and Blood* of my *Saviour*, that it may be real Nourishment to my *Soul*: Which I beg for the sake of him who offer'd both his *Body and Blood* for my *Salvation*; *Jesus*, thy Son, and my Redeemer. *Amen.*

O Most Good and Gracious *Jesus*, how excellent was thy *Love* towards us; thou leavest thy *Body and Blood* to be our Food to Nourish us.
O thou

O thou true Food of my *Soul*, receive me who am to receive thee, quicken me with thy *Spirit*, feed me with thy *Flesh*, satisfie me with thy *Blood*, and let me receive Life from thee, to act and live unto thee. O, my Lord, give me a *Heart* that I may think on thee, a *Soul* that I may love thee, and a *Mind* to remember thee. Let me find thee, O my hearts desire, let me hold thee, O thou whom my *Soul* doth love; O my life, for whom all things live, by which I live, without which I die. O, my Lord, let me renew this life of mine, by coming to thy *Holy Sacrament*: Where may I find thee but here? O that I may faint in my self, and depend on thee. O Lord, let me love thee, because thou didst first love me: Where shall I get words to express the signs of thy particular great love towards me? I bless thee for my *Creation*, *Preservation*, and all the Blessings of this life, but most of all for my *Redemption*, and the benefits convey'd to us in the *Holy Sacrament*. O let me go to thy *Holy Table*, to receive *Life* and *Salvation*. O that I may cry after God, even the living God; that I may watch for thee more than they who watch for the Morning, and that my delight may be in thy Commandments, O God. I

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I Dare not presume to come to thine Altar, Most Holy Lord God, before I have cleansed my Mouth, by confession of my *Sins*, washed my Hands in *Innocency*, and purified my heart by profession of my Faith in my *Redeemers Blood*; for thy sacred Word teaches me that Holy Thing must not be given to Dogs, nor Pearls cast before Swine: with loathing of my self, and greatest detestation of my rebellious corruption, I confess that never Dog so oft returned to his Vomit, nor Sow to wallowing in the Mire, as I have to sin and sensuality. I was at first conceived in *Lust*, and since *Lust* has conceived in me, and brought forth sin, and sin had long ago brought forth *Death*, if thy Grace and Mercy had not prevented it. I am not able to conceive, what sin I have conceived in my heart, or uttered with my tongue, my best actions are tainted, how much more my defects; my *Prayers* against sin are, through their many imperfections unless thou cover them, abominable in thy sight, how much more the sins themselves, against which I pray: All the remedies which thou hast prescribed in thy Law against the maladies

dies of my Soul have increas'd them, and so improv'd my *sin*, that *sin* is become above measure *sinful*. O Lord, thy Commandments are exceeding Broad, and extends not only to our Words and Actions, but to our Thoughts, Desires and Affection; the smallest desire of *sin*, is *sin*, the very inclination to *sin* without consent of the will, the delight in *sin* against the consent of the will, our vain fancies by Day, and dreams by Night, though not in our power to prevent, are pollutions in thy Eyes, who are purity it self. Who then can say his Heart is clean, or who knoweth how oft he offendeth? O cleanse thou me from my secret Faults, Pardon all my known and unknown *Transgressions*, whether they be Omissions of any duty Commanded by thee, or Commissions of any thing forbidden. O loose me from those Bonds where-with *Satan* and my own *Lust* have bound me; thou seest I have abundant need of thee, but am so cloged with *Guilt*, that I am not able to move towards thee. O let not my *impenitence* and *unworthiness* frustrate thy Mercies to me, and since thou hast appointed this *Spiritual Feast* for rich and famished Souls, let my desires

fires be answerable to my need of it, and do thou qualifie me by thy Grace to receive the full benefits of it. O *Christ hear me*, and grant that I may approach thee, with more sincere and fixed Resolutions of an intire Reformation; and let me receive such strength from thee, as may enable me *faithfully* to perform them. Lord, there are many old Habitual Diseases my *Soul* groans under, and though I lie never so long at the pool of *Bethesda*, come never so often to thy Table, unless thou be pleased to put forth thy healing Vertue, they will still remain uncured. O thou Blessed *Physician of Souls*, heal me, and grant I may so touch thee, that these lothsome Issues may immediately stanch, that these *Sicknesses* may not be unto *Death*, but to the Glory of thy Mercy in pardoning so polluted a *Wretch*. Lord, have Mercy on me, and grant I may approach thy *Holy Table* with such *Humility* and *Contrition*; *Love* and *Devotion*; that thou mayest vouchsafe to come unto me, and communicate to me thy self, and all the Merits of thy *Passion*. I acknowledge to my shame and sorrow, that this *Feast* has often been prepared, and I have with frivolous excuses absented

my self, or if I have come, it has been rather to defy than adore thee; I have brought such Troops of thy professed Enemies, unrepented *sins*, along with me, as if I came not to commemorate, but renew thy Passion of what punishment ought I to be thought worthy, who have trampled under foot the Son of God, counted the *Blood* of the Covenant an unholy thing; by defiling my self with sensual pleasures, and breaking my *holy Vows* since I received the *blessed Sacrament*, and thereby have incurred the greatest danger by receiving that *Unworthily*, which can take away the guilt of my *Sin*; yet, O merciful Jesus, this *Blood* is my only refuge, let this make my attonement, or I *perish Eternally*; Wherefore didst thou shed it, but to save Sinners? O let me find its saving Efficacy, let not the price of thy *Blood* be utterly lost, but Pardon that heap of *sin* which I bring to thy *Cross* to be forgiven, that so I may be an acceptable Guest at thy *Holy Table*, which I beg for thy Compassion Sake, *Jesus my God and Saviour*.

Blessed and all sufficient *Saviour*, I,
the unworthiest of thy Servants,
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prostrate my self at thy Mercy Seat, humbly imploring that Pardon and Forgiveness of my multiplied *Transgressions*, which render me unfit to receive the least of thy multiplied Kindness, much less of being made a partaker of the greatest in the participation of the *Sacred Body and Blood* in the *Holy Communion*. Dear Redeemer, let me approach this *Divine Institution*, with a prepared *Heart*, and a purified *Soul*. O that infinite Justice of the Almighty, in taking so full vengeance upon *sin*, even upon thee his only beloved *Son*, that we might fear and tremble at the sad Effects of *sin*. O the infinite Mercy of the Almighty, ever to think of such a remedy for miserable Man's Restoration. O the equal Goodness of thee our dearest Lord, who wast a willing Sacrifice, who wast *Content, Ambitious, Hungring* and *thirsting* after our *Salvation* by thy dreadful *Passion*, for which let me bow my self at the Footstool of thy *Cross*, and mourn for thy Sufferings, as occasioned by my *Sins*. O let the drops of thy *Blood* trickle down into my Bosom, and wash out the stains of *sin* there; let thy *Thorns* pierce me to the *Heart*, and thy *Nails* fasten me to thee, as much as e-

84 **Advice to those who never**

ver they did thee to the *Cross*: Thou that didst entertain *Judas* with Tranquility, and sufferest him to kiss thy Cheek, reject not me thy unworthy suppliant. but kiss me with the Benediction of thy Lips, and with the Affections of a *Saviour*; thou that didst permit the Soldiers to bind thee, to satisfie for my looseness and abused liberty, bind me now unto thee with the Chains of *Love*, let that *Holy Union* dissolve the Cords of *Vanity*, and subdue my Passions and unruly Desires. Dearest Lord, as in my Body of *sin* there is no part free, so in thy suffering Body there was no whole part; nothing but *Sores* and *Stripes*, *Wounds* and *Bruises*: I have offended in all my parts, thou wast tormented in all thine, so that with shame and sorrow, I confess that my sins inflicted the misery of thy *Passion* by the hands of thy *barbarous Enemies*. O let the *Spear* that pierced thy *Heart*, sweetest Jesus, pierce mine with true *Sorrow*; let me contemplate on thy *Passion*, with infinite hatred of *sin* that occasioned it, and with infinite gratitude to thy *Love* for performing the same. I adore thee, O Lord, Blessed Jesus, for instituting the *Holy Sacrament*, strike an awe into my
Soul

Soul when I approach it, and create in me Heavenly dispositions to celebrate so Heavenly an institution; let me verily believe, that if with due preparation I come to thy Altar, as certainly as I receive the outward sings, so certainly shall I receive thy most blessed *Body* and *Blood*; to receive which inestimable Blessing, O merciful Lord, do thou fit and prepare me for thy mercy sake in Christ Jesus our Lord.

O All sufficient Saviour, teach me by thy great good Examples, Obedience and Submission to thy Divine Will. I humbly beseech thee so to prepare my Soul to the due receiving of the *Holy Sacrament* worthily, that I may thereby effectually feel, tast and feed on thee my Saviour Christ, that I may by thee have *Eternal Life*. Pardon, O Lord, pardon my unpreparedness to come to so *Holy* and *Divine* a *Mystery*, make thy *Word* and *Sacrament* always so powerful and effectual in my Heart, that I may thereby be sanctified and renewed unto all Holy Obedience, unto thy Will, in the mortification of my sinful Corruptions, renewing of thy perfect Image in me unto *Holiness*,

Righteousness, Sobriety, Truth, Knowledge, Faith, Temperance and Chastity.
 O Blessed Jesus, by thee let me have access to thy *Heavenly Father*, that by thee he may accept me, who by thee is revealed to me; let thy *Innocence* and *Purity* procure pardon for my uncleanness and disobedience, let thy *Humility* extinguish my *Pride* and *Vanity*, and thy *Charity* cover the multitude of my Faults, and that thou wilt with the hands of thy *Mercy*, immediately after this life, receive my *Soul* into everlasting Joy and Felicity, there to Reign with thee for ever.

A Concluding Prayer.

O Lord God, into thy hands I commit my *Body, Soul, and Spirit*, my *Thoughts, Words and Works*, desiring wholly to be thine. O my God, Gracious and Merciful accept me in thy beloved Jesus Christ; for his sake let me not go from before thee without a Blessing, a Blessing of *Pardon and Peace*, a Blessing of thy *Spirit* and of thy *Grace* to come Holy to thy *Table*, a Blessing of
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of thy favour and of thy love in the Lord Jesus ; thus Lord, say of me that thou hast Blessed me, and I shall be thy Blessed for ever ; pardon the defect of Prayers, my Coldness and Wandring in my Devotions, and deal with me according to thy Mercies in Christ Jesus, who in compassion to my infirmities has taught me to call thee Father, and when I pray, to say,

Our Father, &c.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

Having performed these Devotions faithfully, let us wait for the Blessing of the Lord ; if we would have a speedy answer to our *Prayers*, let us have respect in all our Conversation to what we have been doing. 'Tis not sufficient that we passionately beg God's Favour, we must endeavour to deserve it by performing his will, and when God sees that we choose him, he will not deny us the Blessings that are needful for us. 'Tis not to be supposed, that Man is serious who can be earnest and zealous in his Closet, but loose and intemperate in the World, or that he is heartily desirous to be eased of his burthen, who makes no other attempts to

acquit himself, but when he is upon his Knees. Can we think God will hear the Prayer of a Man who only asks to be freed from his Infirmities? *When the wicked Man turns from his Wickedness, and does that which is Lawful and Right, he shall save his Soul, and not before.* If a Man that is an *Adulterer, Lascivious or Unclean*, would have his *Vices* routed out, he must first set himself against the *Sin*, endeavour to mortifie the *Lust*, and avoid the occasion of his Folly, and then he may expect God's Pardon for the past, and assistance for the future: He ought during the time of his Tryal to beg God's Grace to help him in the conquest of this *Enemy*, and if he is sincere, may be sure in a little time, that he will be more than Conqueror; but don't let us fly to God to save us from those *Evils* we voluntarily run into, which we don't care to avoid, and which are no longer uneasy than they sensibly affect us. We shall but mock God, and provoke him to give us up to the deceits of our own Heart; but 'tis hoped they who are arrived so far in *Vertue*, as to set their Resolutions to approach the *Altar of God*, have no such custom that they truly are sorry for
their

their *Offences*, and intend to lead a new life, that their Faith is such as overcomes the World, that they have brought under their unruly Appetites, and are zealous of *good Works*. These are the things about which we ought to Examine our selves, let this be our study, the nearer we approach this Solemnity that so we may search every Corner of our Hearts, and when we have set our ways before our Eyes, there is no doubt but we shall bewail the iniquity of them, and raise in our Souls an ardent love to Christ who is so ready to relieve us, and has done so much to bring us into Favour with God. Our *unworthiness* and his Mercy are sufficient to exercise our thoughts our whole lives, we are astonished at the one, and confounded at the other; but when we consider his mercy extends to the other World, even to the making us happy for ever, we know not what to say are desirous, our Eternity should be passed away in his Praises, and even wish for the order of a Seraphim to express our grateful acknowledgments in *Joyful Hallelujahs*; they who consider the dignity of this Sacrament, will be desirous of approaching thither with all possible purity,

purity, and endeavour to cleanse themselves according to the Purification of the Sanctuary. In short; let us but get a true understanding of the Sacrament, and that will teach us our Duty.

Let us add the following Form to our Devotions on Saturday Evening.

O What shall I do to have my Soul wholly possess'd with thee, but by coming to thy *Holy Communion*, there to seal the promises I have made to thee this Week, for the future to live more Godly? Suffer me (thy justice laid aside) to speak unto thy mercy, me Dust and Ashes, yet suffer me to speak, being 'tis to the mercies of God; say unto my Soul, *I am thy Salvation, and hide not thy face from me*, let me see it, though I die, least otherwise I die, so as never to see it; the mansion of my Soul is too narrow to entertain thee. O let it be enlarged by thee, by my coming to thy Table, it is very ruinous, be thou pleas'd to repair it; cleanse me, O Lord, from my secret sins, from my presumptuous wicked-

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wickedness deliver thy Servant. I have confessed these my sins unto thee, and hope thou hast forgiven the iniquity of them. I do not contend in judgment with thee, for thou art the Truth: If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, who may abide? But we have confidence in thy mercy through the merits of our Saviour and Mediator, who was also made known to the Saints of Old, that they by the Faith of his *Passion* to come, as we by the Faith of it past, might obtain Salvation. As he was *Man*, he was *Mediator*, but as he was the *Word*, so he was no midling Person, because equal to God, and God with God, together with the Holy Ghost, one God. How far hast thou loved us, O thou good Father, who sparedst not thine only Son, but delivered him up for us ungodly? How far hast thou loved us, for whom he who thought it no Robbery to be equal to thee, was made subject even to Death upon the Cross? Therefore do I justly repose strong hope in thee, that thou wilt heal all my Diseases which are very great, but much greater is the cure which thou hast provided. This is my great delight, and so often as I can be released

92 **Advice to those who never**

released from necessary affairs, I will repair to this pleasure of coming to thy *Table*, neither find I in all these things which I run through any settlement for my Soul, save only in thee. Behold, O Lord, I cast all my care upon thee, let me live, and I will consider the wonderful things of thy Law; thou knowest my *Ignorance*, my *Infirmities*, teach me, heal me, O Jesus, in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom. Redeem me with thine own *Blood*, for I meditate on it; I Eat and Drink at thy Table, and desire to be satisfied therewith, amongst those who Eat, and are satisfied.

Oh! Lord, thou seest how much I have left behind after all my dilligence to cleanse and purifie my *Soul*. Alas! all my thoughts of thee are but *Dreams*, my Desires but a *Vapour*, my love but a *Flash*, my Prayers are but a *Breath*, and my Tears will scarce fill a *Buble*; my Sorrow is no bigger than a *Sigh*, all that I do, I am ashamed of it my self, and thou mayest much more loath and dispise it. Come thou, O Lord, therefore and search my *heart*, try me, and know my *thoughts*, see if there be any way of *wickedness* in me, and lead

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me in the way Everlasting. Do thou awaken in me most lively thoughts, do thou inkindle a burning affection, open thou the Flood-gates of my Eyes, and open thou my Lips that my Mouth may shew forth thy praise. O my gracious God, unless thou interpose thy power, I am very much affraid I shall not keep this little goodness till the next morning, which now seems to be in me. These weak Thoughts, these faint Desires and sickly Affections that are in my Soul, I doubt will not live a Night, unless thou find ways to preserve and cherish them; my inveterate Habits of Evil will smother and choak these new Resolutions, I am in fear that all these Meditations will be flown away, while I am a sleep, and my House be foul again, unless thou keep me. Ah! my dear God, seeing I have bestowed some small pains upon my heart, and have conceived some little hopes, suffer them not to be dash'd to pieces in a Night, spread the Wings of thy goodness over me, and maintain that, which not I, but thou thy self hast wrought. Lord, let me find when I awake, that my affections and desires are grown beyond the strength of Man, and that thy power

er rest upon me. Oh! let me find a greater fervor than ever in thy Service, let that spark which I fear would go out, be blown into a Flame that will never expire; so shalt thou draw mine Eyes towards thy self alone, who workest such wonders, and my Lips shall ever flow with thy Praises. Lord, if I may beg this *Grace* of thee, I am verily perswaded I shall languish after none but thee; therefore my good Lord, I leave my self in thy hands, hoping that either I am, or would be, such as thou desirest, and if I am arrived but as far as a Will and Desire to be thine, that Will is thine, and therefore seeing the Will is mine too, and we both conspire together, I take the boldness to say, *Lord, let thy will be done.* Oh! sweet Saviour, I was going to say, I am sick of Love, that I cannot love except thou love me, and make me better, but I correct my self, and 'tis enough if I be sick, because I cannot love thee. Do thou make me sick, or rather do thou make me well with love unto thee, so shall I come to thy Table with Joy and Gladness, hoping that thou wilt kiss me with the Benediction of thy Lips, for thy love is better than Wine; draw me, and

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I will run after thee, yea, we will run after thee, for I will proclaim to others the loving kindness of the Lord, *Amen.*

Devotions for the Day we intend to Communicate.

IT well becomes a Christian's Piety to welcome the day which brings our Saviour so near to us, with acts of Joy and Thnaksgiving, for the approach of so great a Blessing. And since one Night may breed too great a damp, and chillness upon our Spirits, it will be very wholesome to renew those Thoughts and Affections that we left there when we went to Bed, and so go to the house of God, in a sense of our unworthiness, to entertain so glorious a Person; and in a sense of sin which is the cause of that unworthiness, together with a joy in our Souls, and Praises upon our Tongues that he will forgive them, humbly desiring of the Lord that he will accept of us for his Habitation, and that he will come and enlarge our Souls

Souls by a holy Love to him, and longing after him, that there may be room for his Sacred Majesty, and a place clean and dressed to receive him. In order hereunto, as soon as we awake, let us adore that Sacred Majesty of Heaven in the following Ejaculation.

A Prayer.

O Merciful God, as thou hast awakened my Body from sleep, so by thy Grace awaken my *Soul* from sin, that I may appear before thee this day at thy *Holy Altar*, with a pure and undefiled Soul. **O** Jesus cloth me with the Wedding Garments of Righteousness, and true Holiness, that being a worthy Receiver of thy *Body* and *Blood*, I may continue steadfast to my lives end, and at the last Trump, according to thy Blessed Promise, be made a partaker of thy Heavenly Kingdom; *Amen.*

The solemnity of this day requires a most exact attendance in the service of God, all our affections should be so employed, that even the necessities of this life, ought not to incumber our
Souls;

Souls, or take off those Holy Meditations which should be inseperate to our Minds, much more should we dispencc with things of less moment, and therefore however we indulge our selves at other times; let us now take leave of our Bed, and prepare to meet our God with humble Addresscs, and rising with a thankful acknowledgment for the Mercies of the Night past, let us say,

Glory be to thee, O Lord, for watching over me this Night.

Lord, raise me up at the last day to life everlasting.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was crucified for me, I arise; be by his cross and Passion, save blefs and preserve me this day and for ever, Amen.

As soon as we are Dressed, let us retire into our Closet, and before we prostrate our selves at the Throne of Grace, exercise our Thoughts a little upon the approaching Solemnity, and reflect upon our base ingratitude, consider how infinitely unworthy we are of such an inestimable benefit, and then let us adore that inexpressible Goodness which gives us so glorious an opportunity of waiting on our loving Lord at his Holy Altar, after such a

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religious confusion of Saul, let us humble our selves, and say.

Good Lord pardon thy servant who endeavours to prepare his heart to seek thee, though I be not cleansed according to the Purification of the Sanctuary.

A Prayer.

O Lord, I do not presume to come to that great Feast of thy Body and Blood, upon the least opinion of my own worthiness; for when I look upon my self, I dare not come least I should Eat and Drink my own Damnation; but when I consider thy infinite Mercies unto us, and thy own words calling all men without exception, and knowing that thy crucified Body is not only food to nourish, but Physick to cure: I beg leave that am but Dust and Ashes to come to thy Holy Table, and with my weak Faith, to feed upon some Crumbs of the Bread of Life. I confess, O Lord, I have no Wedding Garments on me, but I come to seek them at thy Cross, from thy bitter sorrows to derive into my Soul a Godly sorrow working an unfeigned Repentance, from thy broken Body, a broken

ken Heart, from thy warm Blood flowing from thy wounded side, Zeal and fervency, that I may love and admire thee my God as I ought to do. I come, O Dear Jesus, to fetch Humility and Temperance, Chastity and Charity, and whatever thou seest needful for me. O bury all my sins in thy Grave, my stony Heart, my natural Corruptions, and vile Affections; I come, O Lord, to fetch a new life from thy Holy and Blessed Resurrection, for I stand in amazement when I consider my own vileness, and how miserable my end must be when the Heavens are not pure in thy sight, and the very Angels are charged with folly; there is no Holiness, O Lord, if thou with-draw thy Hand, no Wisdom profits if thy Government ceases, when thou leavest us we perish, we are unstable and unsecure unless secured and confirmed by thee, we fly to thee for help, and yet depart from thy Commandments. O how meanly do I deserve to be thought of, how little and inconsiderable is the good I do; how innumerable, how intollerable are the Evils I have done, many good things have I received from thee, but I have abus'd them; thou hast given me Grace, but I have turned it into Wantonness, thou didst create in me a hope of Glory, but I

have lost my Confidence. Wherefore behold, O Lord, I come unto thee, thou mightest indeed justly censure the approach of such a polluted Creature to be a daring presumption, but I beseech the condemn not the action, but behold the motives which drew me hither, even my own miseries and thy mercies. I increase the number of my sins, what shall I do to thee, O thou preserver of Men? Who shall raise me up when I shall fall before thy dreadful Judgment Seat? I will lay my Face in the Dust, and confess my self to be nothing. Pity my Shame, O God, bind up my Wounds, remove those sins that so easily overcome me, and unite me to my Saviour Jesus. O help me to supply in Humility what I want in worthiness, let my mean and just opinion of my self, my bended Knees, and broken Heart, shew that I durst not have adventured so nigh, if thy mercy had not held out the Golden Scepter; O then dear Jesus, be a Jesus to me, and let this Sacrament be a savor of life, and thy Body the Bread of life, thy Blood the purifier of my sinful life: O send me not empty away, for I shall faint and die, I cannot live without thee; O let vertue come from thee and heal my Sickness, do thou appear to my Soul in these holy Mysteries, enlighten my

my Darkneſs, turn me from all vain imaginations and illuſions of the Enemy, all perversneſs of Will, all Violence and Inordinate Paſſions, ſensual Deſires, Luſt and Malice, Gluttony, Pride, Envy and Detraction; let not ſin reign in my mortal Body, nor the Devil lead my Will captive, nor the World abuſe my underſtanding, nor debauch my Converſation. O grant I may receive theſe Divine Myſteries, for the amendment of my Life, and for a deſenſative againſt all my ſins, for the increaſe of Vertue, and the perfection of the Spirit; this I beg, O merciful God, for the ſake of thy Eternal Son, my crucified Saviour and Redeemer Jeſus, Amen.

Here riſing up, read as Follows.

AND as they were Eating, Jeſus took Bread and gave thanks and bleſſed it, and breakt it, and gave it to his Diſciples, and ſaid, *Take, Eat this is my Body which is given for you, this do in remembrance of me; likewiſe alſo, he took the Cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, ſaying, Drink ye all of it, for this Cup is the New Teſtament in my Blood which is ſhed for you, and for many, for the Re-*

mission of sins, and they all drank of it. Verily I say unto you, *I will not drink henceforth of the Fruit of the Vine, until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God my Father.*

I adore thee, O Blessed Jesus, for instituting this Holy Sacrament; O let thy Divinity thus stampt on it, strike into my Soul a holy awe in approaching it; O create in me a Heavenly disposition to celebrate so Heavenly an Institution, and for thy Mercies sake, pardon all my stupid forgetfulness, and ingratitude hitherto; do now create in me such a thankful and lively remembrance of thy dying love, that may excite me to give up my self intirely to thee, as thou didst give up thy self on the Cross for me. [Kneeling say,

A Prayer.

BEhold, O sacred and undivided Trinity, an unworthy, wretched, weak, and wounded Soul, oppressed with an intolerable weight of Misery, terrified with the consideration of thy inscrutable Judgments, confounded with the memory of her base ingratitude

gratitude, and encompassed with sorrow. I have with the prodigal wasted that portion of Grace thou didst bestow upon me, and therefore do infinitely want a supply out of thy Treasury; but, O Lord, how shall such a wretch as I dare to approach this Holy Table, how shall this spiritual Manna, this Food of Angels be given to one? Who has chosen to feed on Husks with Wine? nay, to one who has so often trampled upon these precious things, either carelessly neglecting or unworthily receiving these holy Mysteries. O Lord, my horrible guiltiness makes me not dare to stay away, for where shall my polluted Soul be washed, if not in this Fountain which thou hast opened for sin and uncleanness, hither therefore I come, and thou hast promised him that cometh thou wilt in no wise cast out; this is, O Lord, the Blood of the New Testament, grant me so to receive it, that it may be for the remission of my sins, and though I have so often, and so wretchedly broken my part of that Covenant whereof the Sacrament is a seal, yet be thou graciously pleased to make good thine; be merciful to my unrighteousness, and remember my sins no more, and not only so, but place thy Laws in my Mind, and write them in my Heart, and by the power of thy Grace, dispose my Soul

to such a sincere and constant Obedience that I may never again provoke thee. Lord grant that in these holy Mysteries, I may not only commemorate, but effectually receive my blessed Saviour, and all the benefits of his Passion; and to that end, give me such a preparation of Soul as may qualify me for it; give me a deep sense of my sins and unworthiness, that being weary and heavy laden, I may be capable of his refreshings. Raise up my dull and earthly mind from groveling here below, and inspire it with holy Zeal, that I may with spiritual affections approach this spiritual Feast; and let, O Lord, that infinite love of Christ in dying for so wretched a sinner, inflame my frozen and benumbed Soul, and kindle in me that sacred fire of love to him, and that so vehement, that no water may quench, no floods drown it, such as may burn up all my dross, and not leave one unmortified Lust within me, and such as may also extend it self to all whom thou hast given me command to love, even my Enemies as well as Friends. O Lord, I beseech thee cloath me with the Wedding Garment, and make me though of my self a most unworthy, yet by thy mercy an acceptable guest at thy Holy Table, that I may not eat and drink my own Condemnation,

tion, but may have my Pardon sealed, my Weakness repair'd, my Corruptions subdued, and my Soul so inseparably united to thee, that no temptation may be ever able to dissolve the Union, but that being begun here, in grace it be consummated in Glory. Grant this, O merciful Father, for thy dear Sons sake, Jesus Christ our Lord.

ONce more, O my Soul, contemplate that thou art now a preparing thy self for that Divine Banquet, which thy loving Lord instituted a little before those sufferings and that Death, before the breaking of his Body, and the shedding of his Precious, Sacred, and Royal Blood, which he declared to be signified by the breaking of the Bread, and the pouring out of the Wine, for he went that very Night into the Garden, where his pious Soul, apprehensive of Divine Wrath, humbly addressed with reiterated supplications for Relief, and being sensible of the miseries of Mankind pressing hard upon his spotless Soul, the Torments of the approaching Cross, the executing Terrors of the Powers of Darkness, and the whole Artillery of an incensed God,

which

which he was in little time to grapple with; they shook his very Nature, melted him into streams of Blood, and so cast down his Spirits, that nothing less than an Angel of the presence, was able to mitigate the conflicts of this otherwise insupportable Agony. These are but the beginning of Sorrows, for no sooner then Mercy overcame the afflicting convulsion of his Soul, who was sorrowful to Death, but he began to fortifie his kind intentions to poor Man, by that inexpressibly loving, and unparallel'd Resignation to the will of his Heavenly Father, he chearfully proceeded to offer up that Sacrifice which was to appease the Divine Justice for the iniquities of an impious World; when after a most exemplary submission to the affronts and injuries of implacable Spirits, the ingrateful Malice, and supercilious Envy of those who thirsted for his Blood, being despitefully abused, afflicted and tormented, denied by some, forsaken by others, desolate and comfortless in every sense, truly a Man of sorrows was forced to add weight to his past Sufferings, and bear the Cross of his own Crucifixion.

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Where, O my Soul, behold by Faith the Lamb of God lifted up for the sins of the World. O humble thy self into the center of thy own nothing, for of what punishment oughtest thou to be thought worthy, that hast so insens'd the Majesty of Heaven, to give up the innocent and most Holy Jesus, thy best, thy only Friend, and his dear Son to be Tortured and Tormented for thy sins. O how cruelly was he scourged with Wips, wounded with Thorns, loaden with the Cross, torn with Nails, pierced with a Spear, and racked on the most painful instrument of Death, his lovely Face defiled with Blood and Spitting, his Ears fill'd with Upbraidings and Curses, his Eyes drenched in Tears for the ruine of his Enemies, and his Soul amazed at the Terrors of an angry God ; 'till at length all wounded, broken and bloody with many groans, yet with admirable patience he breaths out his Soul with infinite Charity and Forgiveness.

O holy Jesu ! how excellent is thy Goodness ? O ye blessed Host of Heaven, who rejoyce at the conversion of a sinner, adore and praise that unknown sorrow, which ye your selves contemplate with awful admiration. I

I cannot doubt thy power to ease me, because of these Suffrings of thy Love ; I must not question thy willingness, who callest me of thy own accord, nor dare I suspect thy sincerity, who art Truth it self, and always in earnest with poor sinners ; my Guilt has made me think to fly from thee, but thy melting Voice has encouraged me to turn to thee, and laid me prostrate at thy feet, groaning under my Offences ; but if thou wilt pittie me, I am safe ; if thou art pleased, I am eased ; if thou pardon me, my burden is gone ; and if thou wilt take away this intollerable Load, I will then venture to draw nearer even to thy Altar, O holy Jesu, there to receive more refreshment from thy mercy. *Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* These are thy words, O Christ, for thou hast spoken them, and they are mine, because spoken for my salvation. O sweet and amiable words in the ear of a poor sinner, by which thou invitest an indigent, starv'd wretch to partake of thy Body : But who am I, O Lord, that I should come ? The Angels and Archangels reverence thee, thy Saints and holy Ones fear before thee,

thee, and yet thou sayest unto me, come: Unless thou hast said it, who could have believed it to be true? Unless thou hadst commanded it, who durst have attempted this approach?

Does my Saviour invite? and shall I go? Shall a sinner dare to sit down at his Table? Does he invite, and shall I not go? Shall a Wretch presume to refuse his Call? Rise then, my Soul, and take thy swiftest wings, and fly to the presence of this great Mystery.

A Feast of Holy Bread and Holy Wine, in representation of thy sacred Body and Blood, where thy all glorious self is freely to the meanest guest a feast of peace and love, and incomparable sweetness, to which thy own blest mouth thus kindly callest us.

But stay, am I dressed like a friend of the Bridegroom, that I safely may come to the Marriage Supper; have I considered how chaste those eyes should be which go to behold the God of purity; have I considered how clean that mouth should be, which presumes to eat that Bread of Heaven, but most, how all celestial that Soul should be which aspires to a union with the Body of Christ.

Oh!

Oh! how poor, and dull, and empty am I, how infinitely unworthy of so divine a Sacrament; yet am I call'd by him that can Command, by him that sees and pitties my misery; he bids me come, he surely will receive me, and with his bounteous fullness supply my defects.

Go then, my Soul, to that sacred Table, and take thy part of that delicious banquet; go all inflamed with Love and joy, and hope, and quench thy holy Thirst with that spring of bliss, when thou hast tasted his everlasting sweetness, and feelest his heavenly streams flow gently on thee; open thy happy breast, and suck those Waters in, and let them freely run over all thy powers.

Let them soak deep to the root of thy heart, and turn thy barren heath into a fruitful soil; fruitful in holy thoughts, and pious words; fruitful in good, just and charitable Deeds, fruitful in good examples; and God of his infinite goodness confirm all this, that my Soul may bless his holy Name here, and with the whole host of Heaven sing *Hallelujah* to him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever hereafter, *Amen.*

[*Our Father, &c.*

O

Receiv'd the Sacrament. III

O Lord, bleſs me and keep me, this day.

O Lord make thy Face to ſhine upon me, and be gracious unto me.

O Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon me, and give me peace this day, and for ever. *Amen.*

The Bleſſings to be obtained, and the ſenſe of our Unworthineſs, which ſurely by this time is ingrafted in our hearts, will inform us, that each moment of this day ought to be carefully employed, and therefore in every interval when we can't be upon our knees, let our holy Meditations carry us above the contemplations of this world; and as this is a day of rejoicing, in which our Souls are to be ſolaced with the raviſhing ſweet of ſo divine a reſt, let our Actions atteſt this inward ſatisfaction, and ſhew in ſome ſort by their humble demeanor, that they are touched with a ſenſe of thoſe incomparable delights, and can relinquish their ſenſual Enjoyments to attend the Devotions of their better part. After we have thus diſcharged our Duties in private, let us prepare for our more ſolemn Devotions in the Houſe of God. In our way thither, let us endeavour
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to get stronger apprehensions of God, and the invisible Majesty that dwells there : Let us strengthen our Faith by a positive belief of the presence of the Most High, and this will occasion a holy Awe and Reverence when we enter the Church, and cause us to say with humility : Surely, the Lord is in this place : How dreadful is this place ? This is none other but God's house. This is the Gate of Heaven.

As soon as we are placed in our seats, it will become us to bow our selves before the Lord, and in humility of Soul to offer up our Petitions to the Father of Heaven.

A Prayer.

O Most gracious and merciful Lord, thou hast call'd all those that are weary and heavy laden with the burthen of their sins to come to thee, and hast promised to ease and refresh them ; thou hast invited all those that hunger and thirst after Righteousness to come to thy Table and taste of thy Supper, and has promised that thou wilt satisfie them in assurance of these
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promises; I come to the Lord Jesus, beseeching thee to ease and refresh me, and to satisfy me with thy Mercy, for I hunger and thirst after thee, and thy Salvation. I confess that my daily sins have made me unworthy of my daily Bread, much more of this heavenly Banquet. O make my Soul ascend to thee in an humble supplication, and let my Saviour's intercession procure thine acceptance, and give me such a faith as may take possession of all I pray for; besprinkle my polluted Soul in the Blood of thy dear Son Jesus, O let the Blood of his Wounds, and the Water of his Side make me clean, that I may come to the blessed Feast of the spotless Lamb. I confess, O God, that when I consider thy greatness, and my nothing, thy purity and my uncleanness, I see it infinitely unreasonable and presumptuous in me to approach thy sacred presence, and desire to partake of thy Sacrament, or hope for a part of thy Glory; but when I consider thy Mercy and thy Wisdom, thy Bounty and Goodness, thy readiness to forgive, and willingness to impart thy self unto thy servants, then am I lifted up with hopes, then I come with boldness to the Throne of Grace, even so, O Lord, because thou hast commanded and lovest it should be so. It was
I never

never heard from the beginning of the World, that thou ever didst despise him that call'd upon thee, or forsake any that did abide in thy fear, or that any that trusted in thee was ever confounded; but if I come to thee, I bring an unworthy person to be joyned to thee; and if I come not, I shall remain unworthy for ever; if I stay away, I fear to lose thee; if I come, I fear to offend thee, and that will lose thee more: I know, O God, my sins have separated between me and thee, but thy love, O Jesus, and thy Passion, Holiness and Obedience has reconciled us, and though my sins deter me, they make it necessary I should come, and though thy Greatness amazes, yet it is so full of goodness, that it invites and encourages me to approach these holy Mysteries this day. O mighty God, rebuke Satan, restrain all Earthly and Carnal affections, that they do not once dare to whisper a temptation to my Soul, a distraction to my Thoughts, while I am in Communion with thee at thy Holy Altar; do thou, O Lord, rule me by thy Grace, govern me by thy Spirit, and defend me by thy Power, and crown me with thy Salvation, which I humbly beg in the Name and Merits of my Redeemer Jesus, whom with thee, O Father, and the Holy Spirit,

Receiv'd the Sacrament.

115

*I will Worship as one God to all Eternity,
Amen.*

Let us now employ our Thoughts as becoming the Sons of God, and all the vacant time before the service of the Church, let us employ in holy Meditation. Let us remember not only that we are in his presence, but that this is his day, on which we are met to glorifie his Name; for the good things we have received, to ask such things as are necessary for our future well-fare, and to hear his Holy Word, to direct us in the way to Salvation. Let us beg of him to open our Hearts, that we may receive with meekness the word we are to hear; that for the Merits of Jesus he will receive our Prayers, and no doubt when God sees us earnestly and humbly challenging his Word, he will for his Truth and promise sake grant us all those good things which he knows needful for us; and this should mightily encourage us to be sincere at all times when we enter the place where his honour dwells. Certainly every Christian that is sensible of the greatness of God, won't dare to dissemble or behave himself irreverently there, especially at such

116 **Advice to those who never**

a time when our strickest attention is required, and even that not enough, to contemplate the most High.

When the Service begins, we are to lay aside these Meditations, and immediately apply our selves to that, if we devoutly attend to every part, shall need no Paraphrase to heighten those expressions, or make us more in love with that incomparable compofure ; 'tis the singular excellence of the Common Prayer, that they who frequent it always find out something that deserves to be more admired than they can express. I dare affirm no one ever found any flatness or defect that came without prejudice, or was piously inclined, for it contains all that may occasion a sensible pleasure to a good Man. The Sentences and Exhortations are excellent motives to press us to our Duty ; the confession full of Pathetical expressions, and suited to the conditions of all men ; the Absolution most comfortable to a penitent Soul that wants to be eased from its weary Burthen. The Hymns, and Psalms very proper to stir up our Souls to a holy rejoycing in the Lord ; the Scripture has its place that we may receive comfort from those lively Oracles

cles of Truth. After the profession of our Faith, we supplicate our God according to the Apostle, not only for our selves, but for those who are in authority over us, nay, our Charity reaches further, to all Christian Kings and Princes; and to shew we are not forgetful of those of lesser degree, we extend it to all sorts and conditions of men; What can be more agreeable to a devout Soul, than thus to exercise it self in the Law of God? What can be more moving than to see, and hear a devout Priest offering up Prayers and Supplications, and others joining in his Petitions by Echoing a hearty *Amen*? How does it constrain us to out-vie in Zeal, and cause a Holy Emulation, when we hear our Minister with fervency, crying to the Father of Heaven to have Mercy upon us, and we with equal earnestness invoking the Son and Holy Ghost mercifully to hear us? Let others mock, and call them vain repetitions, while we endeavour to express the desires of our Souls in those Pathetical supplications, *Lord have mercy upon us*, We are not so vain but to confess our want of that Mercy, nor ashamed of the Repetition when we find

the benefit, even the favour of the Lord, which is better than life it self; wherefore I must be earnest with every Christian to attend this service; don't let our thoughts be roving, but correct the wandrings of our minds, the whole Service is in order to prepare us to a worthy reception of the Holy Sacrament; when once we have got the mastery of our selves, and can go along with all the parts of the Church, we shall have less occasions for these helps to Devotion; we shall find so much contained in the Prayers and Exhortations, as will take up all the vacant time in Holy Meditation; and this will make Holiness become exceeding delightful, when we can turn our Souls towards God, and solace them without interruption; when we can leave the thoughts of this World, and look steadfastly to God. But this is to be done by degrees, when we have conquer'd the love of this World, and wearied our selves from its Alurements, and this only to be performed by a constant watch over our words and actions, and perseverance in the ways of goodness.

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When the Prayers of the Church are over, let us humbly ask God to pardon our defects in his Service, and say,

O Lord Pardon the wandrings and coldness of my Petitions, deal not with me according to my Prayers or Deserts, but according to my needs, and thy infinit mercy in Jesus Christ, Amen.

Having discharged our duty in Prayer to God, let us prepare our selves to hear what he will say to us out of his Holy Word; we ought to look upon the Minister as an Ambassador of Christ, and hearken with reverence to his Doctrine at the end of it, to beg that we may bring forth the Fruit of it in our Lives and Conversation, and this we can't do in better words, than in one of the Collects after the Communion.

[Grant we beseech thee Almighty God, that the Words which we have heard this day, &c.]

While the People are going out, let us devoutly turn towards the Table of the Lord, and endeavour with admiration and reverence, to contemplate the approaching Ordinance; let us enter-

rain thoughts of our unworthiness, and then humble our selves before the Lord, and say,

A Prayer.

O Almighty God who art infinite in Compassion, and art able to pardon more sins than I can commit; the stretcht out Arms of my dear Saviour upon the Cross, can encompass the largest extention of my sins, and his Passion affords an ever flowing Red Sea to cover them, that they may not become my confusion: O then let his Blood be my Bath, purge me with Hyssop and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than Snow, and to capacitate me for these Mercies, let the deepest sorrow wound my Soul; Oh! let it grieve my Spirit that I have lived so long to the grief of thine, and let me grieve so long that I can grieve no more, make my Soul to ascend in an humble supplication, and let my Saviour's intercession procure thine acceptance, and give me such a Faith as may take possession of all I pray for; and least my own trust should deceive me when I have said Amen to my Prayers, do thou say

say Amen to my Amen, that so an Establishment of Blessings may be the crown of my Soul, which I beg through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ. Extinguish, O Lord, all the Fires of Hell, my Lust, Pride, Envy, Malice and Uncharitableness; create in me, O God, a great longing after the Bread of Heaven, and a thirst after the fountain of Salvation, that as the Heart panteth after the water brooks, so my Soul may long after thee, my Saviour and Redeemer, Amen.

When the Minister goes up to the Holy Table, let us raise our Affections, and prepare our selves to accompany him in this great work, and fixing our selves in a devout posture when he begins the Exhortation to Charity, let our thoughts carry us beyond the literal Expression of those Sentences; and whilst he Reads, consider the necessities of the Poor. Let us enlarge our desires, and wish we were able to satisfy the complaints of those who are in want, at least let us resolve to do according as God has put it in our power, not Grudgingly, and of necessity, because 'tis the custom, and the Church requires it at such Seasons. Here we have

have an opportunity of examining our selves whether we have fulfill'd the will of God in this manner. 'Tis not to be supposed that we deserve the name of charitable persons, who take no time to distribute of this World good, but when we can't help it; therefore let us ask our Souls at every Sentence, Hast thou followed this Advice, or obeyed this Command? Hast thou performed that great duty of the Law, doing as thou wouldst be done by? Hast thou restored with interest, whatever thou hast unjustly detained from any Man? And first, have we taken care that they who have sown unto us Spiritual things, should reap of our Temporal; for 'tis meet, those who wait at the Altar, should be partakers with the Altar, for we must know, that even so, God hath ordained, that they who Preach should live of the Gospel? Therefore if we have fail'd to do this, let us ask God's Pardon, and don't let us, because the Minister can't exact it, take that advantage, and pay nothing? Secondly, have we shew'd our compassion to the poor, by giving Alms? Have we not turned away our Face from our Brother who was in need, but been merciful after our power?

power? If our Hearts condemn us not, we have confidence in God that he is Righteous, and will not forget, but reward us in the day of necessity; thus may we turn these excellent Admonitions into heads of Examination, and happy are we if we have offer'd up such Sacrifices as are acceptable. The Church has taken care to tell us what they are, and has placed them at the beginning of this excellent Office to exhort us to Good Works. We are about to remember that exceeding love of Christ, and the wonderful charity of our Saviour, therefore 'tis very proper in the entrance to this Holy Ordinance, to exhort us to be like minded, that our Lights may shine before men, and the world may see the love of God dwelleth in us, by our readiness to perform his commands; but what need we of Arguments to press us to that which is so reasonable in it self, which the Law of Nature teaches we ought to do. But a sad experience informs us, that neither the law of God nor nature is sufficient to oblige some tempers to compassion; but let all such remember, however serviceable their Estates are to them in this World, they will turn to their destruction in the other.

ther ; their full Barns that have been shut at the knockings of the Poor, will then be of no advantage, nor the multitude of their riches prevail for their security, both of them will turn to their reproof; the rust of the one, and fullness of the other will sink them into despair, and exclude them to Eternity from the Happiness of God.

We have been taught that no one must approach this sacred Feast in bitterness of Spirit, we must have love towards the Brethren, and if we are in charity with all men, shall more especially have bowels of compassion to those who are in want ; therefore let us while we have opportunity, impart of our abundance, and bless God for enabling us to do good to the House-hold of Saints ; and this coming from us so readily, will be the more acceptable sacrifice, for God loves a chearful giver, and that our Alms ascend not alone; 'tis necessary we accompany them with Prayers, and though we have no Angel to assure us they come up before God, yet we need not doubt their acceptance, for God himself has assured us with such sacrifices he is well pleased, therefore let us humbly say, *[at the giving our Alms.* *Bless*

[*Blessed be thou, O Lord God, for all things come of thee, and of thy own, do I now give thee; O let this Alms be an Odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, and well pleasing in thy sight.*

After the sentences are read, we have nothing to do, but devoutly compose our selves, and joyn with Reverence to the Prayers of the Church; if we consider the substance of this excellent Office, we shall be freed from the interruptions which often occur in our devotions; for when our minds are wholly taken up with the signification of the words, we shall have less room for wandrings. When the Prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church is begun, let us interest our selves in that excellent form, that when the Priest comes to beseech God to accept our Alms and Oblations, let us in our minds humbly beg it for Jesus Christ his Sake, and that together with them, God would receive our Prayers for the Universal Church; for we can't but enlarge our Passions, and desire the good of all Mankind, not only of those who confess Christ, but that the Heathen may be brought

brought into the Possession of our Saviour, and agree in the Truth of his Holy Word ; we must desire the Wellfare of Princes, because they are set over us by God, for the punishment of Vice, and the praise of them that do well ; and for the Pastors of the Church, there is a great deal of reason for us to pray for them, that they may duly administer this Holy Mystery, and by their Example and Doctrine, both save themselves and those who hear them ; they who are in Affliction call for our fellow-feeling, and since we are all of one body, we can't let any member be in disorder, and neglect to procure its remedy ; we are passionately to desire the Health and Salvation, not only of those we know want present relief, but to all that are in any danger, Sicknes, or other Distress, considering it may be our condition, and we must desire it with the same Ardour, as if it was for our selves ; and since God has given us the example of good Men, who are gone before us, we ought to pray that we may follow their steps, that so we may arrive to the same degree of Blessedness, and to obtain all this more certainly ; we are to beg it in the name of
Jesus

Jesus Christ, believing that God will never refuse any thing that is convenient for us, when we call upon him in that most prevailing Name, especially since he is our Advocate, we have the assurance of his intercession, and God can deny nothing to the Son of his Love.

After this excellent Prayer is over, we are exhorted by the Minister to a more serious preparation to the Communion, though 'tis supposed that every one who approaches this Holy Table, has considered before, repented and got a competent understanding in this sacred Mystery, yet it is very necessary we should attend this Exhortation, and Re-examine our selves whether we are such as the Gospel requires. The Church has taken care to instruct us in this Duty in such a manner, that we can't easily deceive our selves; she encourages us with rewards, and sets before us the dreadful consequence of our carelessness or neglect. We may be over aw'd in our private Examination, by the Dominion of our Lusts, or perhaps the love of our selves may incline us to think better than we are; but when we hear God's Minister urging us to this Duty, and powerfully representing those things

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we have prevailed with our selves to pass over, and that God is immediately present to acquit or condemn us, we are obliged to confess our Wickedness and be sorry for our sin; this is the Repentance we shan't be ashamed of, that will put us in a state to be reconciled with our Saviour, and make us fit to receive the Body and Blood of Christ, and the benefit of that is, the becoming one with him, and to be partakers of his Everlasting Glory; therefore when we hear the Priest exhort us, *Judge therefore your selves Brethren*, let us humbly say, I confess my self a sinner, and condemn my ingratitude.

[*Repent you truly of your sins past, &c.*
 I repent, O Lord, and am sorry for my Wickedness; *Have a lively and steadfast Faith, &c.* I believe, O Lord, help my unbelief; *Amend your lives, &c.* O grant me thy Holy Spirit to amend my life; *Be in perfect Charity, &c.* I forgive all Men their Trespases, Lord, do thou forgive me; *So shall ye be meet partakers, &c.* O make me a worthy Communicant; *Te must give most humble and hearty thanks, &c.* I adore thy infinit love to Mankind in the Redemption of the World by our Lord Jesus;

Jesus; who did humble thy self to the death upon the Cross, &c. By thy Cross and Passion, sweetest Jesus deliver me; He hath, &c. and ordained Holy Mysteries as pledges of his Love; &c. I remember thy exceeding Love to us, miserable sinners; and adore thy infinite compassion in dying for Mankind; To thee therefore; O Jesus; with the Father and the Holy Ghost; let us give; as we are most bounden; continual thanks, submitting our selves wholly to thy holy Will and Pleasure; studying to serve thee in true Holiness and Righteousness all the days of our Life; Amen.

The Priest proceeds now to a more immediate invitation, and to show us that we ought to think highly of these things; calls only those who have such qualifications as he just before told us was absolutely necessary, and that we might not come rashly, puts it to us again; *ye that do truly Repent; &c.* But to heighten our esteem, and make us more in earnest with our selves; let us imagine we hear Christ himself inviting us, for 'tis the Minister in his stead, calling us to Repentance, Confession and Humility of Soul; these are the Garments wherewith we ought to be

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cloathed;

cloathed, and he that comes without them, does but mock God, and we have heard the dreadful effect of that presumption; 'tis provoking him to plague us with Diseases, and sundry kinds of Death; we kindle God's wrath against us, and his indignation will last to Eternity. But that the Terrors of the Lord might fright away none but the impenitent, the Church assures us all, they who come with Faith and Repentance, may take the Holy Sacrament to their comfort, and accordingly exhorts them to draw near to testify their sincerity by an humble Confession, and to remove all suspicion of Hypocrisy, commands, that it be done upon our *Knees* with contrition. They who hope for Pardon can expect it upon no other Terms, therefore we ought to be very circumspect, that we don't call upon God with our Lips, when our Hearts is far from him; *the Sacrifice of such Fools only work their Destruction.* Don't let us look upon it as matter of form only, that we are to tell God Almighty a sad story of our selves, and yet in such a manner, as if we were not concern'd for the Sin, nor God for the punishment of it. But when we come

to that part of the Confession, acknowledging our Offences, by *Thought, Word and Deed*, let us reflect on some of those Transgressions we have repeated most, and have most cause to repent of; let us think of them with sorrow, and detestation, with a resolution to forsake them, and a passionate desire to be freed from the Evil of them; let our Hearts go along with our Prayers, and they are such as will inform us of our condition, and being affectionately repeated, will teach us to be humble and contrite, and that will render us capable of the pardon which follows to be pronounced by the Priest.

'Tis impossible to prescribe Rules for our thoughts in the time of Absolution, we have a hundred Idea's at once in our Minds, the Soul is full with Transport, Rejoycing and Humiliation; we have so much to say that we are confounded in our selves, we know not how to bless God enough, are affraid of our wickedness, and astonish'd at his goodness; there is no re-presenting the Passions of a Soul in this Religious Agony, nor how prevailing the confused sighs of a ravish'd sinner are to our merciful God. They who are most sen-

132 **Advice to those who never**

sible of their sins, can best tell what a boundless joy arises at the thoughts of their forgiveness.

But lest we should have any mistrust, because of our sins, the Church has collected some comfortable assurances from the Gospel, for 'tis no wonder we receive our Pardon doubting and trembling; we have need of infallible Authority to perswade us of the truth of these things, when our fear had so cast us down, that we almost were brought to believe that God had utterly forsaken us; we can now cry with chearfulness, blessed be God, that has not so turned his mercy from us, but has sent his Son Jesus Christ to call us to Repentance, therefore when we hear the Priest say, *Come unto me, &c.* Let us humbly say, I come unto thee, O Jesus, ease me of my Burthen; *so God loved the World, &c.* I believe, Lord save me, or I perish; *this is a true saying, &c.* Mercy, sweet Jesus, I am a miserable sinner; *It any man sin.* O thou great advocate of my Soul, *I bless thee, and all that is within me, shall praise thy Holy Name.*

Certainly our affections are so moved, that we shall be zealous to lift up our hearts with joy and gladness, and

now

now confess 'tis meet and right to give thanks ; to which purpose let us summons our strongest affections, that we may with Angels and Arch-angels magnifie the glorious Name of God *most High* ; if it be upon any particular Feast, as *Christmas*, or *Easter*, there is greater reason to strain our selves to the highest Note, to give thanks for those particular Blessings.

We are now approaching nearer to these Holy Mysteries, and must express the greater Reverence, and before we tast how gracious the Lord is, confess our unworthiness to receive him into our Habitation. This we can't do in better Words than the Church has provided for us ; therefore we are to joyn heartily in the following form, and beg that our *sinful Bodies may be made clean by his Body, that being so prepared, our Souls may be made fit to receive the Lord of Glory.*

After this excellent Prayer is over, let us look towards the Holy Table, and whilst the Priest is ordering the Elements, *Meditate and be astonished at the transcending love of Christ ; let us lose our selves in contemplation of that Divine Mystery, that Heaven should so con-*
K 3
descend

descend to Earth, and Man be united to God ; that God should take upon him our Flesh, die for us upon Earth, and nourish us now he is in Heaven. Let us represent to our Faith the intollerable sufferings of our dying Lord, his whole Passion upon Mount Calvary, and the Agonies of that unknown Sorrow there. Imagine we behold him stretch'd upon the Cross, and see the Blood issuing from his wounded side. Behold him grappling with the fury of an incensed God, and all the furies of the Powers of Darkness; and this to redeem us from the Horrors of Hell, which were due to us for Sin and Wickedness. Sure the consideration of these things will create an odiousness of sin, which was so great, that nothing but the Blood of God could expiate ; we shall be sensible of our unworthiness, and adore withall, the forces of our Soul that love surpassing knowledge, and beg of our crucified Redeemer, to inspire us with holy Zeal, that our now softned Souls may Eccho Hallelujahs, and all that is within us may sing Eternally to God the Father, who contrived this glorious Redemption, to God the Son who effected it, and to God the Holy Ghost, who gives us the benefit thereof.

Lct

Let us now return with the Priest, and earnestly beg of our merciful God, that the Elements may really become what they represent. After we have performed that with Devotion, let us leave the rest to God and the Priest, and rising from our *Knees* at the Consecration, look toward the Holy Table devoutly, attending every Word and Action, for all is Mystery, and deserves a particular Meditation; let us imagine we hear our Saviour consecrating, and that we like his Disciples at the last Supper, are waiting to be fed with the Bread from Heaven, when we hear the Priest, saying, *Who in the same Night he was betrayed, took Bread, &c.* Let us adore that inexpressible love of our Saviour, which was working our Salvation when his cursed Enemies were contriving his Crucifixion; let us bless the goodness of God, and admire the Humillity of our Saviour that would be represented by no richer preparation than Bread. Here is no costly sacrifice to exhalt our Treasure, That, we may bestow upon those that want it, the poor which we have always with us; but for the representation of himself, he chuses what is necessary for our sustinance, to

show us that his Body is as necessary to the strengthening of our Souls, as Bread for the support of our Life; *And when he had given thanks, he breakt it, &c. O blessed Jesus, dost thou give thanks for my Redemption, behold I joyn my praises to thine, and bless thee with all my Soul; O shew thy acceptance of my praises, by hallowing these Elements to the purposes they are designed. Saying, Take, Eat, this is my Body which is given for you, &c. Here let us reflect upon the passion of our Saviour, and imagine we see him in that unspeakable Passion, offering up his pious Soul upon the Cross. Do this in remembrance of me.*

O Jesus, let me never be so ungrateful as to forget thee, likewise also, after Supper, *He took the Cup, and when he had given thanks, &c. Our Saviour was not content to give us his Body alone, but to pour out his Blood for us, and has chosen Wine for the Commemoration of that inestimable mercy. O let our Souls thirst after this Cup of Salvation, and when the Minister holds it out to bless it, let us call upon the Name of the Lord; He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this, &c. Do this in remembrance of me. This is the time*

to Exercise our Faith, and therefore, let us believe they really are to us what they represent, and say a hearty *Amen*; for it is unto us, according to our Faith, if we believe, 'tis unto us the Blood of Christ indeed; that no doubting nor infidelity may unhallow these sanctified Elements to any of our Souls. Let us say.

A Prayer after Consecration.

Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and I doubt not but the Mystery is rightly accomplished; I am persuaded that here is that which my Soul longeth after, a crucified Saviour, communicating himself to poor penitent Sinners. O let me be reckoned among that Number, and then I shall assuredly receive thee, Holy Jesus, Amen.

O Holy Saviour, I behold thee stretch'd upon the Cross, with thy Arms spread ready to embrace all Mankind; Glory be to thee, O Lord Jesus, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, who didst offer thy self a sacrifice to take away

way the sins of the whole World, *Lord have mercy upon me, and take away mine also.*

When the Minister is a Communicating, let us humbly desire that God would hear his Prayer.

The Lord hear thee, and remember all thy Offerings and Sacrifices; grant thee thy Hearts desire, and fullfil all thy mind. The Lord perform all thy Petitions which thou hast made at this time for thy self, for us, and all Persons, Amen.

We have nothing to do now, but compose our selves for the acts of holy Communion, remembering we are to feast with God by Silence and Heavenly Contemplation; let us reflect upon the mercies of God in this Sacrament, and when we have by Faith beheld the Glory of the Lord, confess our unworthiness to appear before him, and acknowledge his goodness, which gives us the opportunity of adoring his inexpressible Love.

While others are Communicating.

O *How dreadful is this place? Seemeth it a small thing unto thee, O my Soul, to be feasted with God, waited*

on by Angels, fed with the Body of Jesus, and refreshed with the Cup of that saving Blood, which hath attoned for the Sins of the World? What meaneth this secret, that so poor a Wretch, and sinful a Rebel, should receive so mighty a Favour, and be received to so near Embraces? How can I approach to these terrible Mysteries, till I have pulled back the Vail, and worshipped him that feeds my Body to convey Grace to my Soul, and make that stoop to the Eye of sense, which Angels cannot behold with open Faces? Here is represented the Almighty Love of an infinite Being; here the God of Gods appears all Bloody to fright thee from thy sins; here the All-merciful Saviour of the World, is as it were crucified before thine Eyes, that contemplating the horrid Aggonies of the Cross, and remembering the cause of his cruel Sufferings, thou mayst mourn for thy ingratitude that brought him to the torments of that inexpressible Passion; here the Holy Jesus appears loaded with all the Blessings of Heaven; here the everlasting Trinity seems to use his utmost endeavour, to perswade thee into a Heavenly Conversation. To thy Holy Altar, O Dear Redeemer, I am coming to renew my Baptismal Vow, to enter into a Solemn Covenant
with

with God, and faithfully to promise thee to resign my self intirely to thee, to fall out with thee no more, to be faithful to thee, to vindicate thy Glory, to live up to those Laws which thou hast sealed with thy own Blood. To this end, I eat of thy Bread, and Drink of thy Wine, and so seal my Covenant with thee. Quicken me, O Lord, and make me more earnest and zealous in thy Service, and as thou hast sent thy Son to bring me to thy self, do thou likewise send thy Holy Spirit to sanctifie me for thy self, and then I, who of my self can scarce move unto thy Altar, by the assistance of thy Grace, may run the ways of thy Commandments.

Having declared the reasons of our approaching this Holy Table, and beg'd God's blessing upon us, let us Meditate after this manner.

Thou, O my God, hast prepared a Table for me, and hast promised, whosoever eateth thereof, shall never Hunger, and drinketh, shall never Thirst.

This consideration alone is sufficient to furnish us with matter for Contemplation. The mercy of God in preparing this Sacred Feast, the benefits we receive from it, and the time in which
it

it was instituted when he was surrounded with the Horrors of Death, and began to feel the weight of our Transgressions, are enough to put us in a confusion, and constrain us at once to humble our selves even into our first nothing; for abusing such goodness, and then adore that amazing constancy of our Lord, that in the greatest of his Agony, could endure yet more for our sakes, and resign himself to the Cross, notwithstanding the contradiction of sinners. O let us consider this price with which we were bought, and glorify God in our Bodies and Spirits which are his; therefore bowing our bodies before the Lord, let us consider the wonder of his love.

BEhold what kind of love, O my Soul, is expressed by thy Redeemer, when our sins, his treacherous Servants, and enraged Enemies were contriving his Death; he was designing an excellent benefit for us, the stream of his affections was so strong, that our baseness and ingratitude could not check it; we might have expected that the horror of this dismal Night should have made him repent of his undertaking, and have

have put him upon reversing all his former favours ; but lo, he adds a greater than ever he had given before, and appoints this as a seal to confirm and convey the rest to us. Thy love was stronger than Death; and when all the terrors of thy dreadful Passion were in view, thy Soul was so calm, as to be at leisure to institute this Feast of Joy and Gladness. Surely, I will entertain this Festival with the dearest regard I can express, since it was one of the last and greatest Testimonies of the love of a dying Friend; this blessed Legacy, this parting Remembrance, shall be in my heart for ever.

Having considered the exceeding great love of God, in instituting this Sacrament that very Night he was betrayed, and that he should be mindful of us, when he was about to drink that Cup of which we were not able ; let us now contemplate the preparation our Lord then made for us, and that we have already heard, is Bread, but don't let the meaness of the outward part be a disparagement to this mystery, but let us adore the Humility of our Saviour, who was content with so mean a Representation. A

A Meditation upon the Element of Bread.

O Blessed Jesus, how lovely is thy Humility thou hast chosen to be represented by Bread, and though some curious or costly preparation had been more agreeable to thy Dignity, yet this best expresses thy condescension. Bread is the poor Man's Food, yet necessary for the Rich; it springs from the Earth, yet it is the staff of our Life, and given to strengthen Man's heart, and so it signifies, that Body which thou didst take from the Earth, and gavest for the life of the World. O that I may receive thee by Faith, and then I know I shall draw the most salutary nourishment from thee, and thou wilt as effectually be united to my Soul, as the Bread which is eaten is to my Body. Let me eat this Holy Bread in Charity, O do thou make it thy Body, and it shall be the Bread of Life to my Soul. O merciful Jesus, thou hast taken Bread into thy bountiful hands, and behold I faint for Hunger, I languish for this Spiritual Food, and since I am come so nigh thee, on this blessed day of Distribution, I beseech thee
pass

*pass not by me; as thou takest this Bread;
So didst thou take thy Body only to be broken
in Sacrifice for us, and in Sacrament
to us; let me not therefore want my part.*

O Eternal Word of God, by whose power all things were made, I will not ask how thou canst give me thy Flesh to eat, because, I am abundantly satisfied in thy saying, *this is my Body*, since thou canst make it become to me, whatsoever thou sayest it is. I believe Lord, help my unbelief; what though my senses assure me the outward substances, and its accidents still remain, yet, my Faith and experience tell me, there is an Efficacy therein beyond the power of any other thing. Alas! the Flesh would profit me nothing, for he that is joined to thee must be one Spirit. O let these sacred Symbols therefore make me partaker of thy Nature, and a partner in thy merits; let them unite me to thee, ingraft me in thee, and make that Body mine which did suffer Death for me, and then I shall need no further, but be more happy than if I could understand all mysteries; sure I am, this is thy Body in Sacrament, it communicates to us the blessings and
benefits

benefit thereof, and though presented with a Figure, and by a Holy Right, yet it is to all its purposes, that which it doth represent; I will therefore receive it as thy Body, and esteem it infinitely above all other food, that I may not be judged for not discerning thy Body: O let it be unto me according to my Faith.

I Am a sinful Wretch, O Lord, and yet if I bid thee depart from me, I banish all true happiness from my Soul; I long for thy presence, but how shall I entertain thee? Thou wast born of a pure Virgin, wrapped in clean Linnen, dwellest now where nothing defiled can enter, but never was there so unworthy a partment prepared for thee, as my polluted heart, into which I durst not presume to bring thee, but that I know thou canst make it clean; however, when by Faith I see that Body which all the Angels in Heaven worship, I cannot but abhor my self in Dust and Ashes, I am amazed to see such a Majesty come to visit a Sin-sick Soul in so poor a Cottage; yea, I cannot but tremble at thy presence, O thou King of Glory, because I am so overspread with the filth of sin, but I will lament those

corruptions which I cannot fully purge away, and beseech thee not to despise me though I deserve it. I confess my self unworthy, but thy condescension in stooping to me will be the more illustrious, and if thou hast less delight in me for the present, thou shalt have more Glory afterwards; *When thou hast changed my vile Body, and made it like to thy glorious Body, according to thy mighty Power.*

O My Soul, make hast, behold thy gracious Master is dealing his Bread to those that hunger after Righteousness; be not discouraged at thy unworthiness, for he gives to all Men liberally, and upbraideth not. O dear Jesus, give me a share thereof, declare me to be thine, by feeding me at this Table, thou, who wert content to be bruised and broken to satisfy my offended God. O be pleased to give thy self, and the merits of this thy Passion unto me; Lord, give me ever more of this Bread.

Holy Jesus, I am not worthy to touch this *blessed Body*, as 'tis thine yet I presume to approach, because thy love hath made it mine. This is the sacrifice for my sins, the price of my Re-

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Redemption, and that by which my Soul was ransomed from Hell, and rescued from a dreadful destruction (it was given for me) and it shall now be given to me, and hast thou made such a preparation for me, and offer'd it unto me. Lord, I am transported at thy love, dear Saviour, I will love thee with all my powers, and strive and pray that I may love thee more, as fervently as ever any thy Saints have done; I will give my self unto thee, and dispise all other things in comparison of thee, and when I have once tasted of this all-saving Sacrifice, which was given for me, I'm perswaded that neither Life, Death, Pleasure or Pain, things present or to come, shall be able to separate me from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, *Amen.*

O My Celestial Food, the bread that came down from *Heaven*, how does thy sweetness and my own necessities invite me? My body is liable to Temporal, my Soul to Eternal Death; and behold here is the medicine of immortality, which will remove the sting of the first, and destroy the power of the second, which will fill me with the Graces I want, fit me for the Glory I desire

desire, and advance my Soul and Body above the Power of corruption; I feel a mighty Hunger created in me, which nothing but this Heavenly Manna can satisfy. I despise the meat which perishes and feedeth for Destruction, and long with impatience to taste of this Body of Christ, of which I may eat and live for ever, which will make the Grave unable to hold me, and Hell not dare to shut its Mouth upon me. O make no long tarrying, but give me now and ever this Bread; I desire nothing but Christ, if I want this repast, shall faint or die before I come to the Mount of God.

O My Soul, behold how thou hast incensed the Majesty of Heaven; see thy Saviour offered up for thy sins, and submitting to the heavy Wrath of God, and yet whatever he suffered was thy Portion; Wretch that I am to live in such a manner, that nothing else could satisfy or make my Peace, but here I come this day to call my sins to remembrance; I will look on thee whom I have pierced with a most tender and sympathizing Affection, and while I break this Holy Bread with my Teeth, will commemorate how thou wast bruised

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fed for our iniquities, how our offences did torture thee with grief and pain. Holy Saviour, I'm angry at my self, and full of anguish to see what I have brought upon thee; I'm sorry with all my heart, that I have given harbor to thy Murderers, but I hope this dismal spectacle shall mortifie in me all desires after Evil, and make me abhor all those desperate pleasures which must be so dearly paid for by thee, or stand charged upon my account for ever.

A Meditation upon the Element of Wine.

O What preparation is our gracious Master making for us, he thinks it not enough to give us his blessed Body with the merits of all those Torments which he suffered in the Flesh; but he is pleased to pour out his Blood and Life, together with it, that we might drink thereof, and so take as it were his very Soul into us; miserable Wretches we are, that nothing less will help us: O how gracious a Redeemer have we, that will not deny us this; behold, O Lord, I Thirst, and this Wine of joy makes me more impatient to taste of
this

this Cup of Thanksgiving. Thou that hast prepared it for me, make it thy holy Blood unto me, and then it shall cleanse my Soul, and make me thine for ever.

O Lord, I tremble at the apprehensions of all those Evils that stand between me and thy Glory; the Grave gapeth for me, and Satan is ready every moment to devour me, wherefore I beseech thee, sprinkle me with thy all-saving Blood, that the destroying Angel may pass over me. Let me drink of this Cup of Life, and Death shall be Defeated, the Grave Dismantled, and *Satan* disappointed: Let me drink of thy precious Blood, that I may receive abundance of thy Spirit, so shall my body be hallowed into a sacred Temple, and my Soul replenished with such Graces, that I can never perish. O give me this Divine Cordial at present, and make to me a preservation for Body and Soul to life everlasting.

I adore thy unspeakable Goodness, I delight in thy unmeasurable Mercy, I desire to know nothing but the Lord Jesus, and in him Crucified: O let the Power of thy Cross prevail against all the Powers of Darkness; let the Wisdom

dom of thy Cross make me wise unto Salvation; let the Peace of thy Cross reconcile me to thy Eternal Father, and bring to me Peace of Conscience; let the Victory of thy Cross mortifie all my evil and corrupt Affections; let the triumph of thy Cross lead me on to a state of Holiness, that I may sin no more, but in all things please thee, and in all things serve thee, and in all things glorifie thee. O my God, assist me now and ever, graciously and greatly grant that I may not receive Bread alone, for man cannot live by that, but that I may eat Christ, and then I shall be thy servant for ever.

Great Advocate of my Soul, thou see'st my desires to love thee, I leave my self to thy Mannagement; O enter into this frozen heart, and erect thy Kingdom and Empire there, let every desire of my Soul be subject to thee, and make me willing to submit to any thing, so I may but love thee.

O Compassionate Saviour, whose Bowels yearn over the penitent, let my Soul rest in and contemp^late thee; enlarge my Mind, loose me from my Bonds, and let the effect of the offering up my Soul in the Holy Sacrament,

argument, be, that I may become a servant of Righteousness, and may relish no wisdom, but from above.

O Lord Jesus, I am not worthy to come near so great a Mystery, but thou canst make me worthy; and though I am a sinner, I come to offer the sacrifice thou hast commanded. O pardon my Offences, and receive me graciously for thy Mercies sake.

I lament, O God, my detestable iniquities, for having so long, so often, and so obstinately offended thee. O most merciful Lord, pardon me for Jesus Christ his sake. O hear his dying Groans, regard his Agony and Bloody Sweat by his Cross and Passion, let my sins be blotted out by his glorious Resurrection and Ascension, let every Evil affection and lust be crucified, that I may arise to a newness of life.

Great Friend of my immortal Soul, chuse I beseech thee my heart for thy dwelling place, replenish it with thy Graces, and make me to loath these transitory possessions.

O Lord, what is there in Heaven, or what upon Earth that I would have besides thee?

My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready.

Lord,

Lord, what wouldst thou have to me do,
grant me to do what thou commandest, and
command what thou wilt.

O my sweet Saviour, I long for thy Com-
pany, and am miserable without thee, yet
dare scarce draw near unto thee, because I
have nothing pure enough to entertain
thee; Lord, be merciful to me a sinner,
for I am grieved for my unworthiness,
and amazed at thy condescension in offer-
ing thy self to so vile a Creature.

O Holy Jesus, I am utterly ashamed
that ever I should put thee to such exceed-
ing Smart and Torture, I am ashamed to
think of it, and abhor my sins,

O light of mine Eyes, my secure refuge;
O life of my Soul, my Maker, my Redeem-
er and my preserver; into thy hands do I
commit my Spirit.

O joy of my Soul, when shall I love thee
with all my Heart, with all my Soul, with
all my Might? When shall I enjoy thee?
When shall I come and appear before thee?
When shall I fully please thee?

O that I could always serve thee, that I
could perfectly obey thee.

Grant me, O my only Love, that I may
continually reverence and adore thee.

Permit me not, O Lord Jesus, ever to be
seperated from thee.

Teach

Teach me, enlighten me, direct me, and assist me in all things, but especially at this time, that I may do, or say nothing, but what is agreeable to thy blessed Will, Amen.

I Have made a large Collection of Meditations and Prayers, because of the difference of Congregations; some are very numerous, and I esteem them pertinent to regulate our thoughts in that interval before we go up to the Altar; the lesser Congregations, and they who are desirous to be first at the Holy Table, may have advantage of variety, and make use of them as their inclinations and opportunity will give leave. Our thoughts are not always upon the wing, we require diversity of Arguments to press us to a forwardness, besides they are not designed that our mind should be wholly taken up with them, that we should read them all, and then think we may safely go up to the Altar of God. The best composition in the World will be insignificant, if we don't offer it with Devotion, Sincerity and Affection; one of these Petitions rightly performed, is of greater Efficacy than the whole repeated

red in a rambling disorder. Lord, have mercy upon me a miserable sinner, said with humility, was more prevalent than the long Prayer of the wordy Suppliant. God knows our necessity before we ask, and if we ask with Faith, depending on the intercession of our Saviour, he will grant our Petitions even before they are ended; so that I would have some of them repeated with deliberation, and between them call in our thoughts reconcile them to our reason and faith, and then offer them up with earnest devotion, and so shall we be prepared to receive the Lord of Glory.

When we have made an end of these Meditations, and are ready to go to the Holy Table, rising from our Knees with Reverence; let us say,

Great Captain of my Salvation, I am going to learn to fight the good fight of faith in the blessed Sacrament of thy Love, let thy great Example there, encourage me to fight against all Ambition and Ostentation, Censoriousness and Uncharitableness, against covetous, lustfull and blasphemous Thoughts, against guile and hypocrisie, discontent and mistrust of thy providence; against such enemies, give me Grace to fight,

fight, over these let me Triumph, that having striven lawfully, I may at last be admitted to the sight of thy sweet self, and be charmed with thy Love for evermore.

Having thus began our Warfares, and declared our chiefeft Enemies, let us approach the Holy Altar, that there we may put on the Armor of God, and being endued with Righteousness from above, may walk more securely, and be defended from the subtilty of Men and Devils; therefore as we are going up, let us turn our thoughts to God in the following manner.

As we go up to the Altar;

I Come, Lord Jesus, O take me to thee, for thou lovest me, and hast prepared a Table for me in the seat of thy Love; in the multitude of thy mercies, O Lord God, do I now approach thy Altar: O pardon my Sins, and receive me graciously; if thou shouldst be extream to mark what is amiss, O Lord, who may abide it, but with the Lord is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

Lord, hast thou set open this fountain, and wilt thou let a wretched creature die
for

for thirst in thy presence? Hast thou prepared such Balm to heal me, and shall I languish here before thee? I know if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean, here is the very instrument: Grant therefore, holy Jesus, that I may duly apply it, and rightly use it, and then it shall prepare me for thee, and unite me to thee by such inseparable Bonds, as shall never brake, unless Eternity have an end: Blessed are they who so eat thy Flesh, and drink thy Blood, so as thou requirest, and so as thy Saints have done, for they have been cleansed at this fountain, and here there Union with thee first began. O happy opportunity! Lord, let me do it well this once, and I am thine for ever.

Let us now kneel before the Lord, and say,

O Jesu, Son of God, everlasting King, receive my Spirit, O my Life, take my Soal, my Joy, draw my heart unto thee, thou that art my Head, direct me: Light of mine eyes, enlighten me: O my comfort, rejoice me; my sweet Food, let me eat thee. O Word of God, refresh me: O Light Eternal shine thou over me, that I may understand, know, and love thee.

Af-

After we have thus dedicated our selves to God, let us humbly represent to him the occasion which drew us hither, and beg for his promise sake, that we may not be sent Empty away.

O Lamb of God, thou hast said; he that eateth thy Flesh, and drinketh thy Blood, hath eternal Life; behold thy Servant, O Lord, be it unto me according to thy Word.

O Lord God; I desire to renew my Covenant with thee, and to seal it now with this Sacrament: Lord; put thy Laws into my mind; and write them in my heart; and for the passion of thy dear Son, which I now commemorate, be merciful to my Unrighteousness; my Sins and Iniquities do thou remember no more, but be thou my God, and I will be thy Servant.

The Minister now approaching us, we ought with the Centurion in the Gospel to acknowledge our unworthiness, to receive so glorious a guest, and after such a Humiliation, let us look up with confidence and represent to the Father of Heaven, the prevailing sacrifice of his Son.

Lord;

Lord, I am not worthy thou shouldst come under my roof, but speak the word, Lord, and thy Servant shall be whole.

Behold, O Lord, the sacrifice of the everlasting Covenant, the Lamb that takes away the sins of the World : Oh, let all the World feel the power of his Intercession ; hear, good Lord, the cry of his Wounds, and deny me not since I bring thy Son with me ; let us all know that he lives that was dead, and is a live for evermore.

O holy Bread, which camest down from Heaven, and givest life to the World, come into my heart, and cleanse me from all defilements of Flesh and Spirit ; enter into my Soul, heal and sanctifie me within and without. O my Soul, taste now, and see how gracious the Lord is : Whence is it that my Lord himself should come to me.

Let us now with steadfast Faith repeat after the Minister, bowing our Bodies, *The Body of our Lord Jesus, &c.*

After we have received the Bread, let us lift up our Souls in thankfullness, and say.

Hail !

Hail ! Holy Lamb of God, thrice welcome art thou to a poor perishing sinner. Glory be to thee, O Lord, who feedest me with the Bread of Life ; let thy crucified Body deliver me from this body of death :

Before the Cup.

I Will receive the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst cleanse me ; O touch me, and say, I will be thou clean : Oh, let this Blood of thine purge my Conscience from dead Works to serve thee, the ever living God.

It will not suffice me, dearest Saviour, to receive thee in part only, for I must be wholly thine, and blessed be thy Name, that thou hast already given me thy holy Body to cleanse my Nature ; and now thou art preparing thy precious Blood to wash away my Guilt, my sins have poured out every drop thereof, wherefore thou presentest it to me by it self, to shew how truly thou didst suffer Death for me, and now, O my Redeemer, thou hast said this Cup is the Communion of thy Blood, and thy truth is unquestionable, thy power infinite, and thy love was such, as thou gavest thy hearts blood for me ; I will receive it therefore

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fore as the everlasting Covenant, the Seal of all the promises of thy holy Gospel: I have indeed drunk iniquity like Water, and therefore am unfit to tast this Water of Life, and yet shall perish without it, for I'me all over defiled, and this is the fountain which thou hast opened to cleanse us. I am scorched with the Flames of lust and unruly passion, and this is the Cup which thou hast provided to cool and refresh us: What value is sufficient for me to put upon this immortal Cordial? How can I reverence it enough, since the God of Heaven esteemed it a price sufficient for millions of perishing Mankind: My Soul longeth after it, Lord, let me taste, and my Soul shall live; let me wash in this laver before I come to thy great Tribunal, so shall I be whiter than snow.

Let us repeat after the Minister, the Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.

After the Cup.

IT is finished, blessed be the Name of our gracious God. Blessing, Glory, praise and Honour, Love, Obedience, Dominion and Thanksgiving be to thee, O sacred Trinity, Father, Son and Holy
M Ghost,

Ghost, Amen. Wellcome, O my good Jesus, now dismiss thy Servant in Peace; for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.

If we have time before we return to our Pews, let us add.

How chearing is this Cup to me, blessed Jesus, which was so dreadful unto thee; it was thy Agonies and thy Wounds which afforded me this Wine of Joy. Thou didst find how bitter it was, when thou wert appeasing an offended God, but I taste how sweet it is now, that thou hast made him a tender and reconciled Father. I receive this Cup, O Saviour, as a new pledge of thy dearest Love, and since thou doest here give me a right to that great Expiation, which thou hast made, I do most humbly commemorate the same before the Father of Heaven, as the full satisfaction for my innumerable Debts, and I will remember the dolours of thy Cross, with a brisker sense than ever; because thou hast made me drink of thy Blood, and given me thy Soul; thy Life, and thy Spirit; and since thou hast thus joyned me, to thy self, O let nothing seperate that which thou hast so graciously joyned together, Amen.

They

They who have advanced thus far in their Duty, and been refreshed at the Table of God, will easily acknowledge Thanksgiving to be the least tribute they can pay, and won't be satisfied, that they have given praises at the Altar, but are willing to offer this sacrifice every opportunity, therefore let us at our return to our Seats, be ready to acknowledge the loving kindness of the Lord.

P*Raise the Lord, O my Soul; and all that is within me bless his Holy Name; was it not enough that thou shouldst suffer so much for me, but thou wilt also give all the purchase of those sufferings to me; thy loving kindness is truly admirable, thou hast taken my sins on thy self, and communicated thy Righteousness to my Soul; Lord, while I believe and consider the benefits of thy Passion, I am revived and fill'd with an unwonted Vigour, my Conscience does accuse me of many and grievous sins; but I do here most humbly and thankfully set forth this perfect sin, offering before thy Divine Majesty, I know thou cannot except against it, I believe it is sufficient to atone thine Anger. Blessed Jesus, how is my Soul refreshed, that*

164 **Advice to those who never**

is again restored to thy Father's love; let Heaven and Earth praise thee for this glorious Sacrifice, and I will bless thee while I have any being. I have receiv'd thy immaculate Body, and it shall cleanse my sinful Body, and teach me by the vertue of so rare an Example, to relieve my poor Brethren for whom thou hast died, and to conquer my Enemies by charity; for thus thou hast done to me, and both my lips and life shall set forth thy praise, for now I begin to find the Mercy, Peace, Comfort and Grace which flow from the Death of Christ; wherefore I will love thee, Holy Jesus, more than I can express; and since thou hast given thy self, thy Merits and Graces to me, and seal'd a new Covenant with me in thy Blood, I here bind my self by this sacred Cup to be sincerely thine. I have sworn, and am steadfastly purposed to keep thy Righteous Judgments; O let me never unhallow that Body, or defile that Soul in which the Lord Jesus delights to dwell in; let no Oaths, or Lying, prophane those Lips, no Obscenity or Intemperance pollute that Mouth by which these holy Symbols have passed; but let thy Mercy keep me in this happy Temper till I have accomplished all my Resolutions, Amen.

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Or This :

ALL is thine, Dear Saviour, dispose of all that is here of Body and Soul, of life and lodging, according to thy Divine Will and Pleasure ; I intend, O Lord, strengthen me in this very Hour : I intend, O sweet Saviour, a Total Reformation of my Life and Manners, an intire Mortification of my Corporal Senses, an absolute change in my whole Man ; grant therefore, O good Jesus, that at each word of my Mouth, at each glance of my Eye, at each morsel I Eat, at each member I Move, at each action Inward or Outward I undertake, I may perform all according to thy holy Will and Pleasure. I will therefore expect from thee, O Heavenly Father, the exact Remembrance ; from thee, my Redeemer, the perfect Knowledge ; from thee, O Holy Spirit, a true Repentance ; from thee, O Sacred Trinity, the entire Absolution and Plenary indulgence from all my iniquities, Amen.

We have been informed that this is the great Feast of Love, and are now commemorating that inexpressible love of our Saviour, and since his Blood was shed for the sins of the whole World,

166 **Advice to those who never**

let our Charity extend it self to the uttermost parts of the Earth, but more especially, the Holy Catholick Church; therefore the time we spare from our Devotions, let us bestow in good desires to those present, sending up a hearty *Amen* to the Prayers for our Brethren; let it rejoyce our Souls, to see so many of the Servants of God waiting at his Altar to receive the Bread of Life; let us earnestly pray that this Communion may be life to every one, that all who are present, may meet to Feast in life Everlasting.

O *Thou Eternal Being, vouchsafe to bless, confirm and strengthen us all who are present before thee, deliver us from the day of Condemnation, and let us not be confounded when we shall appear before thee in the presence of thy Angels, but grant that through the blood of the Cross, we may all be cleansed from our sins, and presented pure unblamable, and irreprovable in thy sight, that so we may be admitted into that place of purity, where no unclean thing can enter, to sing Eternal Hallelujahs to him that sets upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever.*

May

*May what we have now offer'd up to thee,
O Lord, be accepted for the good of the
universal World, for all those for whom
the Holy Jesus shed his most precious Blood,
for the Glory of thy Holy Name; and for
the coming of the Holy Ghost, that he may
please to visit and enlighten all our Hearts.
O Lord, be propitious to the Holy Catho-
lick Church, and by the increase of Faith,
Hope and Charity, enlarge its Limits; be
pleased to remember all that are Fallen,
all that are in Captivity, the Infirm, Sick,
Stranger, Fatherless and Widow; in
great Mercy look upon them all, restore,
heal, comfort, and relieve them, for Je-
sus Christ his sake.*

*Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and all
that is within me, praise his Holy Name,
Amen.*

As soon as the Congregation has communicated, let us prepare to glorify the Lord together, in order to it, let us reflect upon the Goodness of this God, who has done so much for us, and if we are attentive to the Prayers of the past Communion, 'tis impossible to behave our selves coldly, or indifferently; there is so much life in the ex-

pressions, that we are forced to utter them with an affectionate concern, and the greater our Zeal, the greater is the Benefit we receive. Each thought must give us an Idea beyond our Expression, we shall be so wholly taken up with this wonderful love of Christ, that we shall be angry our conceptions are so imperfect, that we don't see more clearly this Beauty of Holiness. O let us lose our selves in this boundless contemplation, and be ravished with the loving kindness of the Lord ; and now that we are in earnest become the Sons of God, we may with confidence lift up our hearts to *Our Father which is in Heaven*, which is the first Prayer the Church has appointed to offer up to God ; we have been feasting at his Table, renewing our Covenants, and made partakers of our Saviour and his Spirit ; therefore being so clothed, 'tis very proper our first address be made in his own word. After we have repeated that with Reverence, let us join in the next, for 'tis now high time that we make an offering to the God of our Salvation, and there is nothing we can give more pleasing than our selves to be a reasonable sacrifice ; therefore let us intirely de-

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dedicate our Souls, Body and Spirit to the service of God, and be infinitely rejoyced, that God is pleased to accept us therein, and this will enable us more chearfully to joyn in the following Hymne. When our Heavenly King sees us so hearty in his Service, so desirous of Pardon, that we with the greatest Earnestness, cry to the only begotten Jesus Christ; and with all, so forward to return our humble thanks for his Mercy: No doubt he will be near to our Assistance, and reward us with more than we can ask or think, even exalt us to that state of Glory with him that sits on the right hand of the Father, and is most high in the Glory of God.

After we have thus affectionately joyn'd in the Prayers of the Church, let us with Faith and Thankfulness receive the Blessing, and then with humble Adoration once more magnifie the goodness of God, for who can be weary in praising the noble acts of the Lord?

P*Raise the Lord, O my Soul, and let all thy Powers be acted with such love and wonder, that thou mayest break forth into all the expression of joy and gladness,*

ness, that admiration and gratitude can inspire thee with; Glory be to thee, O Lord, most High.

Let us rise from our Knees and bow towards the Holy Table, shewing our unwillingness to depart the place where his Honour dwells, leave it with a reluctance, and still say in our hearts, 'tis good for us to be here. They who are arriv'd to such a habit, must necessarily desire another opportunity to glorify God in this manner, and be very fond of frequenting his House till this blessed season returns; for we are not to think our Duty done with our Prayers, we must create a kind of a familiarity with God, and no way so likely to do that, as by the constant appearance in his House; there it is he has promised to be, and thither we must come if we would have our Prayers returned with success. Though private Devotions be necessary, yet the Publick are absolutely so; there God is honoured by the company of his Saints, and there we have the opportunity to acknowledge him to be the Lord. 'Tis there we assemble with one accord to present our Petitions to
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the Throne of Grace, and 'tis most likely our Incense should pierce Heaven, when it ascends thither in a thick cloud, but sure there will be no occasion to use Arguments to those who have felt the Blessings of coming thus together; they must see how pleasant it is to dwell in such Unity, and prefer the door of the Tabernacle, to the Palaces of Princes; they who are so unhappy as to be Strangers there, who have no taste, nor are perswaded of the Truth of these things, I could wish they would prevail with themselves to try the deliciousness of the Employment, and I am sure they would be obliged to confess not one half has been told them.

A Meditation for the Communion at Christmas.

Welcome thrice blessed day, the desire of all Nations, whose distant glories made the Father of the Faithful to rejoice, and whose approaches fill'd the World with wonder and expectation; thou wert ushered in with Angelick Hymns, and celebrated ever since with Anthems of praise, because thou didst bring forth joy, and a Redeemer to Mankind. Happy am I that have a sacrifice of Thanksgiving in my hand, to express the delight which my heart doth feel: This Holy Table is the Altar, upon which I offer my Acknowledgments for all mercies; And Oh, how many, how great are those which this day brings to my remembrance, so Infinite it cannot be expressed, and yet so excel'ent they must not be forgotten: This day hath reconciled Heaven and Earth, and Contradictions made freinds; to find a way to help us, as if nothing might disagree when Man was at peace with God: O my Soul, summon all thy powers to admire and worship, for all is Miracle, and the Height of wonder, eternity begins to be; the maker of all is made himself; an infinite Majesty is shrunk into the dimensions of a Span; the Word is made Flesh, and God becomes Man, yet remains God still: Here is a Mother who knew no Man, a Son that had no Father on Earth; a Child of Adam, untainted with the contagion that infects all his posterity; an Infant honored with a new glorious,
Star;

Star; adored by Kings; worshipped by Angels,
yet born in the condition of the meanest Fortune:
All Hail, sweetest Saviour, How lovely is thy
condescension? How honourable thy abasement?
Thou hast more splendor in the raggs of humility,
than all the Grandeurs of this world could give
thee; thou art more of a King, because thou
wouldest be like a Slave for our sakes, and
conquers more hearts by thy stupendous Love,
and unparalleled self-Denial: O how shall I
celebrate this great solemnity, where withall
shall I set forth my gratitude for this most
auspicious Day; I will receive the Cup of Sal-
vation, and with faith and ravishments of de-
light, feast upon that precious Body and Blood,
which Jesus did this day assume for me: It is
not enough, dearest Lord, that thou wast born
for me, unless that also thou wert born again in
me, and as it were become incarnate in my heart:
In thy birth thou wast made one with us, thou
didst put on Flesh; and wert a partaker of our
Humanity, and thou hast appointed this Sacra-
ment, that I might be one with thee, be re-
plenished with thy Spirit, and a partaker of
Divine Nature: Nor is it any incongruity, if
I remember thy passion, and praise thee for thine
Incarnation at once; for as soon as thou wast
born thou didst begin to die, and the life which
was here begun, compared to that glorious Life
which thou didst leave, was it self a very death
for us, which thy Divinity could not feel, and
thy Nativity was the first Scene of thy passion,
for it introduced thy Death, and that effected our
Salvation, so that I will remember both together;

174 Advice to those who never

in both thou hast most admirably humbled thy self to the depth of miseries, and yet I doubt not but thou wouldst have stood lower, if it had been either necessary or possible, but there needs no more Testimonies of thy love, blessed Jesus, I am already over-whelmed with these that are so strange and undescribed, so sweet and ravishing; that my Soul could not contain, if it did not vent it self in thy praises therefore with Angels.

A Meditation for the Communion at Easter.

O My Soul, adorn thy self with the Garments of Gladness, prepare thy most triumphant Hymns to go forth, and meet this great returning Conqueror; thou didst rejoice when he was pleased to undertake the combat, and didst celebrate his entrance into the Lists with praises: How then will it ravish thee to behold him come off with success and Honour, his warfare is now accomplish'd, and he hath passed through the Scorn and Cruelty of Men, the malice and rage of Devils, the just, but severe anger of God, yea, the shadow of death, and regions of eternal horror; and after all this thy surety is set at liberty, for he hath paid his debts, and cancelled all those dismal Bonds, by which thou art forfeited to eternal ruin, thy Champion is victorious, and as the Trophies of his Conquest; he hath the Keys of Death and Hell, and leads them

them both in Triumph vanquished and disarm'd. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord, we receive thee, dearest Saviour, as born to us a second time, and this shall be thy Birth-day, also the Nativity thought not of our Emperor, yet of thy Empire, thy Restoration to a State of Immortality. Thy former Birth shew'd thee to be the Son of Man, but this declares thee to be the Son of God, and now that our Redeemer liveth, he that loved us so infinitely as to die for us doth now ever live to intercede on our behalf, he that expressed such kindness to us in his passion, hath so fully demonstrated his own Power in his resurrection, that we are sure he is able as willing to deliver us: Let the Heavens rejoice and the Earth be glad, for this is the day that the Lord hath made, a day to be had in everlasting Remembrance, a Time destined to Jubilee and rejoicing: Behold how nature is raising it self from the grave of Winter, and seems annually to celebrate the memory of our Lord's resurrection, in her green and fresh attire, a season chosen by God, a Festival three Thousand years ago, and Observed ever since by Jews or Christians, or both, with the greatest Solemnity; see how those blinded Jews rejoiced over their Pascal Lamb in the midst of all their calamities, for the deliverance of their Fathers: But we have a nobler Pass-over, for a greater deliverance, Christ, our Pass-over is sacrific'd for us, therefore let us keep the Feast, and that upon the precious Body and Blood of the Lamb of God, who is slain, but is alive again; behold

bold he lives for evermore, wherefore I will go to thy Altar with joy, and tell out thy works with gladness. O most mighty Saviour, who hast not only died for my Sins, but risen again for my justification, and indeed what comfort could I have found in this memorial of thy death, if it had not been for thy resurrection, this Sacrament would have only remembered thy sufferings, and renewed my sorrow, to think that so excellent a person had perished in the attempt; but it is become a feast of joy, because it is an assurance of thy resurrection, as well as a commemoration of thy Passion; and since thou livest, sweet Jesus, we live also, thy resurrection raised our hearts from sad despair, it gives a new life to our hopes, it makes our sorrows light, our labours easie, our lives chearful, and our death advantage, because it hath lost its sting, and is become the Gate into Immortality; we can charm all our fears and Troubles with this one word, the Lord is risen, yea, the Lord is risen indeed, for thou hast washed us in thy own blood, and made us Kings and Preists to God, to Offer up at this Altar never ceasing Praises.

A Meditation for the Communion on Whit-Sunday.

I Will go to thy Altar, O Lord, with a new sacrifice of praise, because thou hast given me a fresh Instance of thy Love this day; thou art
slow

slow to punish thy enemies; but speedy to comfort thy servants, for no sooner was thy misery changed into glory, but we received the greatest demonstration of thy affections; no sooner didst thou put on thy Crown in Heaven, but the earth felt the bounty of thy dispensations; for it was not possible for thee, sweet Jesus, for thy promise to remain long unperformed, or the sad expectations of thy Disciples unsatisfied: Being assembled therefore this day, with one heart in one place, they are suddenly surprized with wonder, and inspired with a Heavenly power, such as they had never felt before, vigorous as a mighty wind, clearing as the morning light, inflaming their hearts with zeal, and filling their mouths with Anthems, indited with the Languages of all the World: O wonderfull Change, their Ignorance is turned into Learning, their mistakes into infallibility, their fear into courage, their weakness into strength, their sorrow into joy, and they in a moment made able to confound the Arts, and conquer the Oppositions of the Heathen world, and maugre all the devices of Satan, to set up the Kingdom of the Lord Christ; and shall we not praise thee, for these miraculous dispensations by which the gospel was made known, even to us in the most utmost corners, and last of times; yes, Holy Jesus, we will also meet thee with one accord at thy table, not doubting but thou would give us the measures of thy Spirit there, if our duty, or our necessity, did require it; it is enough to us that thou knowest our need more than will supply them; we dare not ask, lest

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178 **Advice to those who never**

thou wilt not give; thou hast given us thy self, wherefore we believe thou wilt not deny us thy Spirit, without which we can have no Interest in thee, nor benefit from thee: We come not, gracious Lord, with the carnal Jews to devour thy Flesh, but to partake of thy Spirit, which only giveth life, the flesh profiteth nothing; behold thy Spirit hath converted Millions: Let me therefore, together with thy precious Body, receive here such proportions of thy holy Spirit, as may suppress my evil Affections, revive my dead heart, comfort my dejected mind, and turn my ignorance into knowledge, my knowledge into practice, and make that practice so sweet and easie, that this may be a day of joy to me also, solemnized in the white Garments of Sanctification and rejoycing; and finally, let not this Heavenly Inspiration be only expressed in Ecstasies, and only fervours this day, but let thy Spirit rest upon me, and dwell in me for ever, so shall I always have cause to bless thee for so incomparable a gift: Methinks I feel already the force thereof, bearing down my corruptions, and the bright beams driving the mists of Sin and Error. I find its flames warming my heart with Zeal and charity, and its quickning power opening my sealed lips to shew forth thy praise.

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A Meditation for the Communion on Trinity Sunday.

O Admirable mystery! to be adored in the profoundest silence, by the contemplation thereof; when I am struck with amazement I can learn humility, and discover mine own Ignorance, and I have the opportunity of exercising a Nobler faith than if I could comprehend it with my shallow reasonings, and imperfect demonstrations, the Trinity in Unity, and the Unity in Trinity hath been derided by the Heathens, and endeavoured to be perplexed by the Wits of all kind of Hereticks, but it sufficeth me, Blessed Jesus, that thou hast revealed it, and thy Holy Church, divided into many other things, hath universally agreed in thy great Truth, and I am the more confirmed in it because I learn by it to worship with a regular devotion, from hence I am the more confirmed: I am taught to pray to the Father in the Name of the Son, through the assistance of the Holy Ghost, and as long as I live will I praise thee, and magnify thee in this manner; I will bless thee particularly at this Holy Feast for so excellent a revelation, for this Ordinance it self contains many things above my understanding, and its all mystery; the Trinity is the Article, and thy Sacrament the Rite which do distinguish thy true Religion from all the sects in the World; wherefore, by ob-

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serving this Rite, I do embrace this Faith, and upon the representation of thy death, I do profess to live in it, and die for it, resolving never to have other Lords; when I find the Father giving, the Son giving, and the Holy Ghost dispensing that Gift unto my Soul in this sacred Communion, it shall be a greater confirmation to my faith in divine Mystery, than can be acquired from the most curious search into it: However I am resolved my Reason shall vail to thy word, and I will be content to stay for a full apprehension of this sublime truth, till I am advanced to a State of Angelick perfection, and come to behold the glories of the true God; till then I will bless thee for what I know, and believe more than I can conceive, and I will worship the same Majesty which the Heavenly Choir doth, in these Addresses.

THE Church has now done her part, and leaves us to discharge the rest, she has told us the benefits, and forewarned us of the danger, let it be upon our own Heads if we have drunk Christ's Blood unworthily; therefore let us as soon as possible retire and examine our behaviour during the Celebration of these Holy Mysteries. How our thoughts were employed, and how earnest our longings were after this Bread of Heaven; whether we had duly examined our selves before,

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fore, and repented as we ought, in what part soever of these things we have done amiss; let us ask pardon and endeavour to come more prepared the next time. This will show that we are sincere with God, and don't come out of custom, but for his Grace and Mercy; and let us take every opportunity to ask that, for Christ is now come very near us, therefore let us lay before him all our wants, that so we may be fill'd with his Heavenly Benediction; let us not lose a minute on this day, but be earnest in all manner of supplication, for we must not leave our Devotions with the Church, that would be setting open the door indeed, that *Satan* might enter into us; but I hardly believe, they who have had their hearts kindled at the Altar, can suffer them to grow cold before they get home; therefore let us retire, before Dinner, and after we have thus seriously reflected upon what we have been doing, let us add to our thoughts the following Meditation.

A Meditation before Dinner.

WHen I compare thy acts with mine,
 Holy Jesus, I am exceedingly
 ashamed to behold so vast a disproportion
 thou givest me, thy Merits and Graces,
 thy Life and Love at present, and hast
 promised to me thy Kingdom in reversion,
 and I have scarce return'd this with the
 intire devotion of one half hour. O how
 little is my obdurate Heart affected with
 the sence of my own Guilt, the fears of thy
 Divine Wrath, or apprehensions of thy sufferings,
 yet, Lord, I desire, and did endeavour
 to praise thee, so that I hope thou
 wilt consider my infirmities with much
 compassion and measure, my services not by the
 exactness of my performance, but by the
 sincerity of my wishes, so shall I be accepted
 before thy Heavenly Father, and by
 the mercy of that acceptance, be obliged
 to thee for ever.

O Most merciful Lord God, I am
 amazed at the mighty favours which
 thou hast shew'd to me a sinful wretched
 Creature; I cannot but acknowledge thy
 goodness, though I can make no Retribution,
 on,

on, had I all the World at my disposal, I could freely give it all to thee as a Testimony of my unfeigned gratitude, but I hear thy gracious voice, saying unto me, My Son, give me thine heart, it is not mine, but me thou seekest; sinful and miserable though I am, yet I am the purchase for which Jesus has left his Glory, laid down his Life, done and suffered all these things. O marvelous Condescension! I am nothing, I have nothing, I am void of all Good, full of Evil, and deserving thy Wrath, so that I abhor my self; and canst thou dwell in me! Be it so then, I will dispute no more with unsearchable mercy, I believe, O my God, and wonder, I can no longer resist thy condescending and almighty love, I will with all the joy imaginable give my self unto thee, who hast but lately restored me to my self; I have been a prisoner to Satan, a Slave to Sin, and marked out for Destruction; but thou hast procured my Pardon, Liberty and Life, requiring no more for so inexpressible a bounty, but that I become entirely thine; had I the life of an Angel, the understanding of a Cherubim, or the power of one of thy Heavenly Host, thou deservest it all. I'm sorry I'm no better, yet such as I am, I do most freely surrender my self unto thee, my Bo-

dy and Soul, avowing I will be no more my own, but thy servant: O be thou pleased to come and reign over me, take possession of this unworthy heart, I hope I shall never be so unjust, perjured and sacrilegious, as to rob thee of my self hereafter; it is indeed a miserable gift that I offer, a defiled Body, and a stained Soul, but 'tis all I have to give, all that thou requirest, and 'twill be the better for being thine; let me never have another Master, let me never sully that which the Blood of Christ hath washed, nor sell that to Satan which Jesus hath bought for God. Grant me therefore, gracious Lord, that I may find by the workings of thy Spirit within me, that thou hast accepted me; give me such help from thee, to confirm my hope, that I may always perform my vows, and never rob thee of that which I have dedicated in the sincerity of my Soul: I am thine, O save me for thy mercies sake, Amen.

Our Father, &c.

From the rising of the Sun unto the going down of the same, the Name of the Lord shall be great among the Gentiles in every place; incense shall be offer'd unto his Name, and a pure offering for his Name shall be great among all Nations.

Glory be to the, &c. As it was, &c.
 This

This Day is appointed to be observ'd as a *Festival*; and I would have no *Christian* so mistake himself, as to keep it otherwise: But since it is likewise a Day to be kept holy to the Lord, we must not indulge our selves over-much, lest we run into another Errour, and make us incapable of serving God, or our selves as we ought, by turning our reasonable Service into sleepy Devotions. And since I'm speaking of the *Sabbath*, it can't be unnecessary to lay down some Rules for our Observation of it. There is no *Christian*, but must lament the general Neglect of it; for one sort spends it in unnecessary Business; the other, in impertinent Recreations; and even they who are more reserv'd, and seem to have a greater Sense of Religion, are apt to make large Allowances, that except the Time spent in the Church, there is little bestow'd on any Act of Religion. The Church requires our Belief of the *Morality of the Sabbath*; and if we were persuaded that 'tis a Day set a-part by God himself, for his own Service, we should have less Inclinations to lay out so much of it in our own: We must positively believe our Obligations to God on this Day, and resolve, that the Time

we don't spend in the Church, should devoutly be employ'd at home. We should separate our Thoughts from the Concern of this World : In the Morning, earnestly beg of God that we may sanctifie the *Sabbath* : After Church, reflect upon what we heard ; if it was practical Matter, resolve to make use of it in our Conversation ; if Matter of Faith, examine whether we can give our positive Assent to it ; if we don't justly comprehend it, let us endeavour to be better inform'd : Let us call to Mind the Benefit of our Creation, Redemption, and whatever else may beget in us holy Thoughts, and a fervent Love to God : Let us turn our Thoughts into our selves, that we may the better understand our Condition towards God ; for how is it possible to be sensible of our Affairs, if we don't suffer our Souls to contemplate for their Safety ? There are many that can't accuse themselves of notorious Crimes, that can answer to the positive Prohibitions of the Law, *All these have I kept from my Youth* ; yet if they suffer themselves to go further in their Examination, will find Reason, with the young Man in the Gospel, to be exceeding sorrowful, though upon another Account ;

count ; they will find a dismal Account of other things to answer, and which are as necessary to be repented of, as they are to be observ'd for the future. Besides, Contemplation is the best Way to improve our Understanding in the Ways of Goodness ; there is infinite Variety for our Thoughts to work upon, and all of them exceeding pleasant : 'Tis this that will make us in love with Piety ; and then we shall soon turn our Speculation into Practice. They who are us'd to meditate, find the Satisfaction of their Consideration : Though 'tis no easie matter for a Man that has wholly bent his Affection to an immoderate Love of this World, to bring under his unruly Desire ; he shall hardly begin to think what he is, why he was sent hither, and whither he is hast'ning, but he shall stop in the middle, and the very Thoughts of the present, put him upon enjoying it in another manner. So vain and trifling are we when we have given up our selves to be mistaken for a while, that 'tis hard to bring us to our Senses, and persuade us we are our selves when we become Rational Creatures. I'm unwilling to prescribe our *Christian Liberty* on this Day ; 'tis certain we may extend it to
all

all Things of Necessity; but then we should be cautious; for we are generally such *Latitudinarians* in things that concern our selves, that we are not willing to lose an Inch of our Liberty; and are apt to think our Time lost, which is bestow'd in the Service of God: Our Trade is not then going on, and we are backwarder by one Day in our Affairs of this World, never considering we have another Merchandize to care for; but if we can secure Wealth enough here, have no great Affection to lay up Treasure elsewhere; as if we were afraid our Riches would corrupt there, or our Venture come short of our Expectations.

guy - - It was the Observation of a great Man, That the more exact he was in keeping the *Sabbath*, his Affairs met with the greater Success in the following Week. Whether every Body would be thus happy, I can't resolve, but am sure there can be no Danger in the Trial; and if we fail once, it may succeed the next: However, there is sufficient Reward in it self, for we shall have the Satisfaction of doing our Duty; and that we can't effect more exactly, than by a devout Meditation when alone, and a serious Attention when at Church. They who
have

have Families, are to instruct their Household in their Duty, and see they discharge it; by giving good Examples and Instructions, and seeing they follow them; for when all is done, the effectual Preachers are Parents and Masters: Ministers may give the best Counsel, and preach the greatest Truths; but 'tis they must see it has its proper Effect in their own Lives and Conversations, and in those that belong to them.

If this were industriously practised, what Encouragement would it be to the Ministers to labour more abundantly for the Salvation of their Flock? And how should we all rejoice in the Day of the Lord, that they had neither run, nor labour'd in vain. In short, Our Communion on this Day ought to be free from Lightness or Vanity; not in Worldly Affairs, nor Relations of foolish Stories, and as little as possible in common Talk, no unnecessary Visit, nor any where but when we have an Opportunity of doing good. This ought to be our constant Care, to apply our selves wholly to God and Religion, and avoid every thing as much as possible that would take up our Thoughts on any thing else. This is truly to sanctifie the
Sabbath:

Sabbath: And they who can thus observe it, will find the Benefit, even an Everlasting Rest to their Souls in Heaven.

After we have dined, let us retire again; and when we have rais'd our Affections by a serious Contemplation, let us say,

A Prayer after Dinner.

O *Thou All-seeing, and most holy God! I have been admitted to make my Oblation of Praises, and my self; unto thee; and am infinitely concern'd that thou shouldst accept me therein; not for any Merit in me; but for thine own Mercy sake. O my God, thou knowest I have been polluted with Sin; undutiful to thy Commands, unfaithful to my Promises, and confederate with thine Enemies; yea, even in the time of these holy Mysteries, so obdurate and confused; that I might justly fear, lest my Wretchedness should make my Sacrifice an Abomination: I blush that I am not fitter: I lament that I should bring so many Defilements, where the Purity of an Angel is scarce sufficient: But I take Sanctuary in thy more obliging Condescensions; and because I am so unworthy, will endeavour to esteem myself as vile as really I am in thy sight. Oh, do not look upon the Defects of a wretched Sinner; but remember thine own Mercies,*
and

and accept what thou hast required of me; and so shall thy Favour be more illustrious, because it is bestow'd upon so evil and undeserving a Creature; and the Sense of my Unworthiness shall enlarge my Thankfulness, and make me praise thee more than if I had approached thee with all Perfections.

It is a mighty Favour to me, O God, that thou hast made Bread to grow out of the Earth, to nourish my mortal Body: But, Oh! how far hast thou transcended that Mercy, in giving me the Bread of Life from Heaven, to feed my immortal Soul! Whom was there in Heaven or Earth that I could have wish'd for, in comparison of Jesus Christ! O my Soul, bless thou the Lord: I went not to gaze, or taste of the outward part; but to satisfy my Soul, by laying hold of the Merits of my Crucified Saviour; yet I have receiv'd the Elements; and thou hast made them to me that which I needed, and desired, even the Body and Blood of thy Son. Oh, how it fills my Soul with Joy to see thy Sacred Majesty appear'd! But, O merciful God; I tremble in Expectation of those furious Assaults which will be made upon me by my Enemies, from whom I am withdrawn. O God, thou knowest how often I have return'd to Folly: But if thou pleasest to plant thy Grace within me, and
send

send thy Blessing upon me, I will not fear the Powers of Darknes. I have receiv'd that Heavenly Food, which is the Means of conveying this Grace unto me. I know by this Cælestial Remedy, many of thy Servants have been dreadful to the Powers of Darknes! and thou didst never cast off an humble Soul. Oh, bless then this Life-giving Mystery unto me, that I may find such Power, Strength and Resolution flowing from thence, that I may stand firm to the Purposes I have made. Sweetest Saviour, I am now thy Servant; Oh, deliver me from Anger, Malice and Intemperance; from Pride, Lust and Covetousness, and all the Furies which use to torture me. O mark me for thine own; and deny me not that Grace which is necessary to make me thine. I'm sure in thee all Fulness of Grace dwells, and let it now overflow, that I may receive of thy Fulness; and then shall I always perform my Vows.

Gracious God, I have beheld the Efficacious Sacrifice which thy Son hath offered for us; I have remembred it, blessed be thy Name for it, though not so highly as I am oblig'd, for the Benefits are inestimable: There is no Want of Merit in Jesus to deserve, nor of Mercy in thee to bestow Remission: Oh, let there not want in me, nor
in

in any for whom Christ died, grace to accept this Pardon. Behold, Lord, how I struggle under a load of guilt, but I have received that which is an effectual remedy, who was ever reconciled to thee, but by Jesus, or who was ever so much thy Enemy, but this Holy Sacrifice has made thee Peace, and shall it be ineffectual only to me; Dear Father, let me find the Efficacy thereof in my self, and then I shall be engaged to praise thee more and more for this great Salvation through Jesus Christ. Our Father, &c.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus, &c.

HAVING thus renewed our desires, and fired Souls with an ardent love of Christ, let us prepare again to meet the assembly of Saints, that we may worship God together, and give thanks to his Name, that we may receive new instructions for the amendment of our Lives, and the confirmation of our Faith, that we may enlarge our desires after Heaven, and see the pleasures of the Habitation of the Lord. At our return home, 'twill be necessary that we give up our selves to a serious Meditation of our actions this day, if our heart condemn us not, then have

we confidence towards God ; if other-
wise, let us humbly beg Pardon : Let
us be earnest in this Examination, for
'tis of great moment to be very circum-
spect now ; don't let us cry Peace
when 'tis far from us, and fancy we are
reconciled to God, when we are in
league with the Devil ; for so every one
is, that has not been heartily sorry for
his sins, and seriously intended a refor-
mation of his Life ; we must not think
our selves perfect because our affections
are raised, and we seem to have a zeal
for the Glory of God, for no one can
approach this solemnity without trans-
port ; if we examined our selves before
entertained Resolutions of Repentance,
and come with Faith and Humility,
though during the Celebration of these
Mysteries, we had Wandrings, evil
Thoughts and Disturbances, yet if we
struggled with them then, and are sorry
for them now, God will receive us in-
to his favour ; therefore 'tis very neces-
sary we should now call our selves to
an account, be sorry for the ill, and
bless God for the good, which may pro-
perly be done in the following form.

A Prayer at Night.

Blessed be thy glorious Name, O Lord, for all thy unspeakable Mercies to me, and all the World; I adore and magnifie thee for thy great goodness, in giving thy Son to die for me, and making me partaker of his blessed Body and Blood. O Lord, what is Man that thou regardest him? Or what am I a vile and wretched sinner, that thou shouldest be thus favourable to me, thou hast been pleased to admit me to renew that Covenant with thee, which I had broken, and to give me assurance of thy readiness to pardon so vile and great a Sinner as I have been. I have received the pledges of thy love, and been admitted to thy Holy Table; I have there devoted my self again unto thee; I have vowed Obedience, and after the most solemn manner, consecrated my self to thy service. Thou art a God that knowest the heart, and art not to be mocked; I tremble when I consider thy infinit Power, Wisdom, and Holiness; let these thoughts beget in my Soul a great fear of thy Name, and care to perform thy Will. Grant I may not turn the Grace of thee, my God, into wantonness, and that I may not receive

thy grace in vain. O Lord, help thy Servant, keep the possession of my Soul which I have unfeignedly surrendered up to thee. O pardon the defeat I have been guilty of in the performance of the duties of this day, and unite my heart, O Lord, to fear thy Name, grant that I may spend the remainder of my time in obedience to thee, and in acts of Charity to my Brethren, create a clean heart, O Lord, and renew a right Spirit within me; guide me by thy Counsel, and at last receive me to thy Glory. I do greatly desire the Salvation of Mankind, and humbly represent to thy Divine Majesty the glorious sacrifice which our dearest Jesus made of himself upon the Cross, and by a never ceasing intercession now exhibits to thee in Heaven in the Office of an Eternal Priesthood, in behalf of all that have communicated this day in the divine Mysteries in all the Congregations of the Christian World, in behalf of them that desire to communicate, and are hindered by any accident, fear, or the sentence of their own Consciences.

Give unto me, O God, and unto them a portion of all good Prayers, which are made in Heaven and Earth, the intercession of our Lord, and the supplications of all thy servants, unite us in the Land of the common Faith, and a holy Charity. I

I humbly commend to thee this Church and Kingdom, all our superiors in Church or State; have mercy upon all states, of Men and Women, give thy grace speedily to all wicked persons, especially those that I have tempted to sin, that they may repent, live well, and be saved; to all good people give an increase of Gifts and Holiness; to all Scismaticks and Hereticks grant conversion; and to all that have erred from the Truth, bring thou into the right way. O merciful God, I humbly pray unto thee in virtue of our Holy Saviour, to grant unto us all the graces of an excellent and perfect Repentance, an irreconcilable hatred of sin, a love of thee, an exact imitation of the Holiness of the Blessed Jesus; for the sake of the Sacrifice of thy Eternal Son, O Heavenly Father, let it be, because it is best, and because thou lovest it should be so, Amen.

O God the Father of Heaven whose mercy is over all the World, I am infinitely pleas'd to behold thy Glory, and to hear the praises which thou hast gotten by thy mercy to poor sinners, and I could even pour out my Soul in the manifestation of that joy which my heart conceives at thy universal Honour; wherefore I will praise thee by Acknowledgments, bless thee with

*Hymns, worship thee with the lowest Re-
 vidence, and glorifie thee to the utmost of
 my Power. I will give thanks unto thee
 with all my Soul, for thy Pity, Patience,
 and Mercy towards thy unworthy and mi-
 serable Creatures. How shall I express
 thy welcome into my Soul, blessed Jesus?
 Or how shall I celebrate thy Praises? I
 will remember what thou art in thy self,
 and what thou hast done for us: O thou
 Eternal and only begotten Son of God, e-
 qual to the Father, who art thy self both
 Lord and God. How lovely art thou, O
 thou innocent Lamb of God, encircled
 with Millions of redeemed Souls, whom
 thou hast washed in thy Blood? O how il-
 lustrious a Brightness shines round thee,
 whilst thou art in the midst of all thy hap-
 piness interceeding for poor Sinners. I
 adore thee, and long to do thee Honour,
 my Lord and my God; hear then my im-
 portunate supplications, and enable me to
 proclaim the goodness of the Lord.*

Blessed Jesus, the Author and finisher
 of our Faith, who art the same To-
 day as to Day, and for ever; thou hast
 given Spiritual means to those that fear
 thee, and wilt ever be mindful of thy
 covenant, but my goodness is as a morn-
 ing

ing Cloud which soon passeth away;
my Devotion fleeth like a shadow, and ne-
ver continueth in one stay; Oh, do thou esta-
blish me with thy free Spirit, that I may
not so easily forfeit my Comfort, forget my
Duty, and break my Vows; how unweari-
ed art thou dearest Saviour; in doing well
unto me. How constant is thy Love, and
shall I be so ungrateful to thee, so cruel to
my self, as to forsake thee, and my own
Happiness? I fear the Power and Policy
of mine Enemies, I do with shame and
sorrow call to mind my former returns to
folly. I most passionately entreat thee not
to leave me to my self, I have, through
thy goodness, now obtained some measure
of Peace; my Eyes are enlightned, my
Heart revived, and my purposes seem to
be sincere; give me thy grace therefore
that I may be able to perform whatsoever
I have promised, that I may be steadfast,
unmovable, always abounding in thy work;
O Lord, let me hold fast that which I
have, and daily strive to gain more; make
me faithful to Death, that thou mayest
give me a Crown of Life.

Now the God of Peace which brought a-
gain from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ,
that great Shepherd of the Sheep, through
the Blood of the everlasting Covenant;

make me perfect in all good Works; working always that which is well-pleasing in his sight, and the Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be with me for ever, Amen.

Our Father, &c.

Praise the Lord, O my Soul, Amen.

There is no occasion to prescribe any Rules for our Behaviour between the Evening Service, and the time of rest; we have already been informed, that no part of this day when we don't communicate, ought to be spent in our own inventions; then surely it requires our strictest observation when we have had so great an honour confer'd upon us, to be adopted the Children of God; the thought of this will continually run in our mind, and we shall have sufficient reason to be always praising God, till Nature puts us in mind of our Necessities, and that its time to commit our Souls and Bodies into his keeping, when we shall be unable to take care of our selves.

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THE
CONCLUSION.

HAVING thus begun our Course,
Let us run with dilligence the race
that is set before us ; 'Tis now that
we are begun to be Christians, and let us
be very cautious how we discredit the
holy Name by which we are call'd. 'Tis
not sufficient to assume the Title, with-
out departing from Iniquity to compleat
the Character: Therefore at our return to
the World, let us have the mercies of God
in continual remembrance; let that good-
ness which has so far led us on to repen-
tance, move us to be zealous in his service,
and prevent our ingratitude, by keeping
our selves from every evil work.

Let us consider, that we are bought with
the price of the Blood of Jesus, and looking
upon our selves so redeem'd, let us not
sell our selves any more to work wicked-
ness.

Let us consider the dignity of our Nature;
that God has made us but a little lower
than the Angels; that we only came into
this World in order for a better; that we
were born on purpose to be eternally happy;
Why then should we do any thing to de-
base

base our selves, and make us incapable of that blessedness, which the Wisdom and Goodness of Heaven has prepared for us? The consideration of this will lead us to praise God for our Creation, which we ought sincerely to do, and shall want no motives to offer up our Thanksgivings, if we consider the inestimable benefits we may receive by it.

Let us consider we are but begun in our way to Glory; that to falter in our purposes wou'd endanger our ruin; and to return, wou'd be to lose the glorious pains we have been at in our conversion: All those Prayers and Tears, Fasting and Alms-givings, which enter'd Heaven in our behalf, and by the intercession of our Saviour, done so great things for us, will turn to our confusion; be a terrible accusation of our hypocrisy, and banish us to eternity from the presence of God; besides, how can we expect to atone Heaven, if we should attempt a second Repentance, when all our former Vows prove false? Won't God be deaf to our complaints, when they are usher'd in by such treacherous Advocates? Can feigned tears move compassion from that God, who is a lover of truth? What form of Prayer will serve our turn, when we have made use of the best composures as a mock to the Judge of Heaven? Oh, Christian! since thou hast approach'd the Altar of God, and there vow'd a perpetual Obedience to his Will, as thou hopest
Heaven

Heaven has heard thy petitions, and sign'd thy release; as thou believest thou hast eat the Flesh, and drunk that Blood of Christ, and by that incomprehensible Mystery art united to our Saviour Jesus; as thou hopest from this wonderful mercy to be raised at the last day to Eternal life, live worthy of thy Calling, by a perfect submission to the Will of God, and a holy perseverance in his ways, make thy Election sure. Since thou hast thus put on the Armour of God, and taken to thy self the sheild of faith; resist the World, the Flesh, and Devil, and thou shalt at last reap that reward which is laid up for those who have continued in well doing, and by their constancy in some sort merited, that eternal Gift of God, which is a Crown of Glory in endless inconceivable joys.

Let us endeavour to fill our Souls with all vertues, and when we are so happy as to have our inclinations after goodness, that we have a fondness for the Glory of God, and habituated our selves in his service, we shall find the advantage of our conversion; for besides the inward peace and satisfaction, which is the result of a pious mind, we may enjoy with more pleasure the Goods of this World, than when we gave a loose to our desires, and were led captive by our lusts; when we so industriously pursue our happiness, we shall arrive to that degree of goodness which will make it as uneasy and difficult to commit wicked actions,

as 'twas at first hard to refrain them. We shall have an aversion to Vice, and see our weakness and folly that cou'd be subject to its embraces; it will then lose all its charms, and we shall yield to that divine Truth, that God is only to be loved; that Religion is our wisest choice; that to be happy is to understand her, for her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. This indeed is what very few believe, Men generally frame an austere Notion of Religion, think it ties them up from the business and pleasure of this World; they have an inclination to serve God, but think he requires so much of their time, that they have but little for themselves, or Families: This may be one reason why some are so religious by fits, they are mighty zealous against an *Easter*, or any particular time of Devotion, but as soon as the Season is over return to their former habit of indifference, and can give no other reason, but that their Business calls them off, as if Devotion consisted in saying just so many prayers; at such an Hour to be in their Closet; to fast such a day in the week, and to neglect the Affairs of this World, because we can't serve God and *Mankind*. Such a Notion of Duty is certainly very prejudicial to the practise of Religion: God created this World for our convenience, and did not design we shou'd be preserved like the Lillies, which toil not, neither do they Spin, but commanded man to get his bread

bread with the swear of his brow, and can we think his labour shall be turn'd to his reproof; that whilst he honestly pursues the necessary Duties of his Calling, that he shou'd be accused for not imploying that time upon his knees. Providence has ordered very differing circumstances among men, and to discharge with fidelity the Post in which he has placed us, is part of our Religion, and when justly perform'd, as acceptable as our Devotion; we may enjoy a great deal of this world, and yet be very good Men; nay, by being vertuous, we may make a freer use of it; for Vertue teaches a right use of every thing, and God has deny'd us nothing that is useful, for all things were created for the use of man: In short, tis not the use, but abuse of this World, that renders us obnoxious to God: We may endeavour after Riches, but not to set our hearts upon them. They are given us to do good with, and when we cross the intent of them, by making them a useles Treasure, the rust of them will make them to consume.

Religion don't tie men up from the Affairs of this World, it only teaches them how to behave themselves in it, by prescribing such Rules which are necessary for the quiet order of the World in general, and for a just management in particular between men; for the general Government of the World, it teaches us that we submit our selves to every Ordinance of Man; that we be not unruly

unruly, stirring up sedition by speaking evil of Dignities; and it comprehends the Church Government, as well as State, by constituting an Order of Men who are to watch for our Souls, and for that reason we are to Obey them that have the rule over us in the Lord. Thus, by obeying Our Spiritual Pastors, and Temporal Masters, we shall at last receive the Reward of our Obedience; but they who resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation: For the particular management of our selves amongst our Neighbours, we are, if possible, to live peaceably with all Men; to be just, and Charitable, and in every thing to do as we wou'd be done by; to be diligent in our Calling, and by an honest industry provide for our Families. We are not to be solicitous for the Morrow, nor by a carping care after this World neglect the other: If we are successful, let's look up to him who is the giver of all good things, for his is the hand that sows the seed, and his the hand that gives the Blessing. If we have losses, and become poor, let us submit with Patience, and resign our selves to his Wisdom, still relying upon his Providence. Such a Contentment may move the compassion of Heaven to raise us again in this Worlds esteem, or what's infinitely better, remove us from the present evils, to the Joys of his Kingdom. Let us remember that we ought to receive Evil as well as good from the hand of God, that he knows what is best for us, and why then

then shou'd we be angry that God does that which is wisest, and most fit to be done. Let us cast all our care upon him, and whatever condition we are in shall have most satisfaction; this is as much a duty, as 'tis pious in it self, and incumbent on the whole race of Mankind. The Rich ought more particularly to have respect to it, least they suffer by their confidence, and trusting in the Multitude of their riches be confounded: The Mighty, that they mayn't be brought low; and thee Poor, least God forget their Cry. ' Oh, how happy are they ' who can with confidence look up to God, ' that can use this World, neither abusing it, ' nor themselves; by making it a hindrance ' to their Religion, and by an unaccountable ' extravagance, make that miserable change ' of their Souls for their Vanity.

Let us first seek the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness; looking upon our selves as born for another World, and that we are only in our Passage thither. Cou'd we but perswade our selves of this truth, we shou'd remove our affection, and make use of this World, but as it serves to conduct us to a better. To what purpose shou'd we strive to heap up riches, when we know not who shall gather them? Why shou'd we be covetous to establish a Name, when the Glory of this World so soon passes away? Let us do all possible good in our Station, endeavouring to be exemplary to the present Age, and not be solicitous
for

for the founding of our fame to the future: That can't affect us, for we shan't be sensible of it; or if we were, can it add to our happiness in Heaven, or shall we have leisure to be pleased with our own Character, when we shall be in view of him, in whose Presence is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore. But after all, our Vertuous Actions must have another motive than Popular applause; for if we do our good Deeds to be seen of Men, we have our reward; we can have no retribution of our good works that are not with a design to the Glory of God; we must do them, because God requires them, and is best pleased when such Devotions are offer'd up for his sake: It shows our conformity to his Will, when our obedience proceeds from a sense of our Obligations to him, and then he that gives a Cup of cold water in his Name, shan't lose his reward. The Mercy of God appear'd in this, not that we loved him, but that he loved us; and can we be too grateful to the inexhaustible love of the Father? Can we propose a greater advantage than we shall receive at his Hands, or suppose it not honourable to be just, for we rob him of his tribute, and make our Vanity the occasion of the Good. The folly of this is too gross to have any Advocates, for tho' Men love to blow the Trumpet that have it sound in the Name of God. Therefore let us be good, because God is so, and
this

this will put us upon every opportunity to please him, that we may by a constant practice of Vertues, mould ourselves more and more into the 'likeness of him, in whom God was so well pleased, because he went about doing good.

It concerns us who have gone thus far in the way of Holiness, that have ceased to do Evil, and began the pleasant exercise of doing Good, to endeavour the performing it in the most acceptable manner. The Holy Scripture gives us direction, and our Saviour's Example to encourage us; let us therefore look up to that pattern of Righteousness, that we may as much as possible be Holy, as he is Holy, and we shall find him summing up all in this one word, *Love*. 'Tis Love, that is the great Duty of the New Law, and absolutely necessary to be studied by all who intend to be saved: We shall have no excuse for our ignorance, or neglect of that Duty, which God came on purpose to instruct and enjoin. We ought to have it perpetually in our Minds, and never proceed to any action without it. In our Retirements we ought to be thinking of it, because that will prompt us to seek some new occasion of our Love, and in our Business, because then we shall never act amiss; for how can he be guilty of an injustice, who has love in all his thoughts, that not only studies to do as he would be done by, but is always considering to do the good in his power, without the mean con-

sideration of return; for to arrive to the
 utmost of this Duty, we must not only con-
 sider what we would have done to our
 selves, but what is fitting for us to do to o-
 thers. This indeed must be left to our Con-
 sciences, but let's have a care of deceiving
 our selves, for our Consciences are to be our
 accusers. Let us remember that we are to
 shew our selves Disciples of our great Ma-
 ster, by loving one another, and if we truly
 do so, God will reward us according to our
 Love; we can't evidence our Relation to
 him more than by our compassions to the ne-
 cessitous, and we are assur'd that unless we
 put on bowels of compassion, we have no
 right to his promise, for if a man sees his
 Brother in want, and relieves him not, how
 dwelleth the love of God in him. Let us
 consider that we are all of the same Body,
 that Christ died for us all, and therefore
 'tis not fitting any one member should pe-
 rish. Christ came to procure to himself a
 peculiar People, *Zealous of good Works*, and
 we must not reckon our selves as his Ser-
 vants, till we can submit to his Command-
 ment. Great Men have it in their Power,
 to relieve the Distressed, to be merciful to
 the Poor, and to be a Friend to the Father-
 less and Widow; the Poor must not be want-
 ing in their part, by being grateful to their
 Benefactors, and faithful in their Trust, by
 being humble, obedient and contented; for
 Love teaches us all things; if we could but
 possess our minds of this excellent Virtue, it
 would

would abate the swelling of our Ambitions, it would inform the Proud, that 'tis nothing but disconceit which advances him above his Neighbour, and inform the Indigent, that nothing but an inward peace and satisfaction is to be desired by those who have any understanding, for *Love's the generous Virtue of the Mind*. If Men believed this, they would not so much labour after a great Name, as a Good; nor desire riches so much to advance their Families, as to benefit the Necessitous. They would not covet to be Great for the sake of Honour, and a gawdy Revenue, but to have it in their power to be just, to advance Merit, and give reward to Desert. Great Men, tho' they have no Employment, have least occasion to be idle; if their Country don't require their immediate service, they have the more time to attend their better part; let God receive their leisure, and the publick be the better by their Piety. If God has Blessed them with great Estates, and raised them to great Dignity, they have the more reason to be diligent, in employing their Honour and Fortune to his Service; it concerns them to manage with caution, and not turn the bounty of God into Licentiousness; they are to give an account of their Stewardship, and where much is given, much will be required; it was given them that they might have an opportunity to do good, and they have the blessing of God here and hereafter for their Encourage-

valent. How ought they then to adore the
goodness of God, that has put in so much
in their power to be Happy, bringing them
a valuable blessing here, as an earnest of a
future Reward. But we are apt to think
that Charity belongs only to great Men, 'tis
true, they have it in their power to excell
Men of less condition, but we are all to dis-
tribute of this world's good, as God has
put in our power; and tho' we can do
great things, let us do what we are able;
there is an obligation even upon the poor
themselves, to afford what help they can to
assist their Brother in Distress; in short, if
we have Love, that will teach us all that is
owing to our selves or Neighbour, that so
we may live as becomes those who profess
that Gospel of Christ in all manner of Holy
Conversation; to let the love of God dwell
in us richly, and endeavour to a similitude
of him, who is the express image of his Fa-
ther, who is Love.

Having considered that 'tis both our Du-
ty and interest now we are arrived thus far,
to persevere to the end, that we may be
saved; that in order to it we must fill our
selves with all Vertues, and that the chief-
est of them is Love; let us resolve with all
our Souls to prosecute these considerations
to purpose; let us not think we stand
too secure to be shaken, but reflect upon our
former weakness, and still suspect our frail-
ty, wherein we most fear by earnest sup-
plication; let us make known our request

to God; that he may support us in the day of Danger, and cover us from the assaults of our Enemies; we are always to lament our old Miscarriages, and their remembrance ought to be grievous. To this end let us continue steadfast in our Addresses to God, and beg that he would still give us a sense of the odiousness of Sin, that so we may be deterr'd from committing it. Let us, as much as possible, frequent the Church, if our necessary Business will not give us leave to attend her daily Devotions Morning and Evening, let us not fail of offering up our private Sacrifice. No Business must intrench upon that, 'tis a right which belongs to God; and if we value our safety, we must not omit it. Let no Man be discouraged, because he can't attend the service of the Church so constantly as he would, if we do it but as often as we can, God is no such Task-master, but he accepts of our Will and Endeavours. But God knows, People are very apt to take up with Excuses, and because they want a mind, will make their business to prevent their Duty, and they who have leisure prefer their Idleness to Devotions; and what I admire at most, some people who frequent the Sacrament, very seldom approach the House of God but when they go up to the Altar, as if the Church doors were never open but on Sundays, or once a Month. How can these Men's Religions be sincere, who have no desires to give God thanks in the Assemblies of
his

his People, and confess their sin among the Congregation of the Lord? How do they live in obedience to the Church, that don't appear at Morning and Evening Prayer, unless unavoidably hindered? And how do they deceive themselves when they make a lying Excuse? Let us all, to whom God gives an opportunity, wait on him constantly in his House; let us observe the Fasts, and the Feasts of the Church, with Reverence and true Devotion, and not bring a scandal upon the Church by our ridiculous mistakes about them; let our Fasts be as he directs, and as God has appointed, and let our Feasts be kept Holy to the Lord. On Saints-Days, let us commemorate the Blessings conveyed to us by that Saint we have in Remembrance, at *Easter*, *Whitsunday* and *Christmas*, the wondrous Mysteries which the Church commends to our Devotion, and not turn them into Jollity and Profaneness. Let our *Lent* and *Ember Days* be held in Veneration, and if we can, strictly Fast, let us do all we can for Mortification; let the poor Man and Labourer not take the opportunity of these Seasons, to spend them in his Diversion; there is no such pleasure as in the Service of God, which is perfect freedom; and since Providence has denied them other opportunities, let them take these to watch for their Souls, and improve them in true knowledge; let not the Rich feed themselves in Luxury, and make these Holy Seasons an occasion of greater Debauch,

branch, for that will make God as much displeased with our appointed times and seasons, as the Fourth New Moons and Sabbaths; but let us all, according to the true intent of them, improve them in true Devotion, and if we continue in the observance of these things, time will shew us the beauty of Holiness. We shall then behold this World with pleasure, and be glad that we were born to this delicious Employment.

Let them who have Families and Children take care to give Examples of Piety, and have to much Charity as not to deny them all opportunities of attending the Church; let them have recourse to God as often as they can, and see that publick Prayers at least once a day be performed in their Houses; instruct them in Religion, and of the Church; teach them the excellency of the Prayers, and to perform them with Devotion; we had need do all we can to bring Religion into Vogue, and pray that God would Establish his Church in Righteousness.

Let us show our Zeal for the Glory of God, by promoting of Holiness among Men; and take care that our Conversation be void of Offence, and give up our time as much as possible to Devotion, that by our constant Addresses, we may be fill'd with God's Grace, and Heavenly Benediction; 'tis to all our Advantages to be upon our Knees, or in Meditation, as frequent as we can; they who know the Pleasure of Con-
versing

versing with God, need no Arguments to bring them to their Closet. The Saints of Old were very Zealous in this Duty, they had their set Hours of Prayer, and if we followed their Piety, we might assure our selves of the like Success. It was *David's* constant practise to praise God in the Evening, Morning, and at Noon-day; and I'm sure our necessities are as urgent as his, and if they who have most leisure would double their Devotion, and offer up their Sacrifices six times a day, their labour would not be in vain; besides, when we are accustomed to this frequent Communion with God, we shall be convinc'd with Holy *David*, That the ways of God are exceeding pleasant, and be ready upon our Solemn days of Devotion to stretch our Zeal to an Equality with his, who took up the holy Resolution of praising God seven times a day, because of his Righteous Judgments.



F I N I S.

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